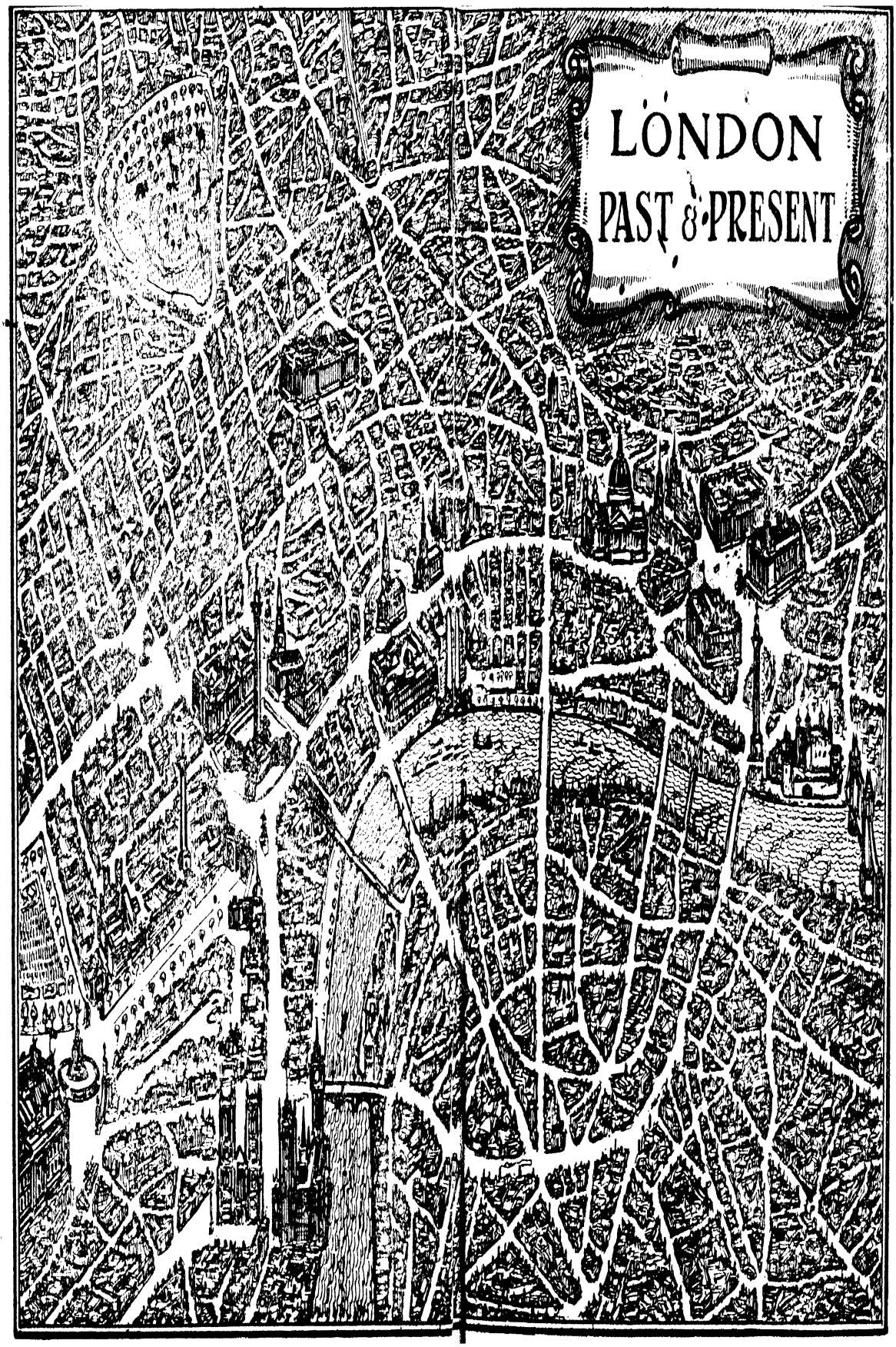

LONDON
PAST & PRESENT

LONDON PAST AND PRESENT

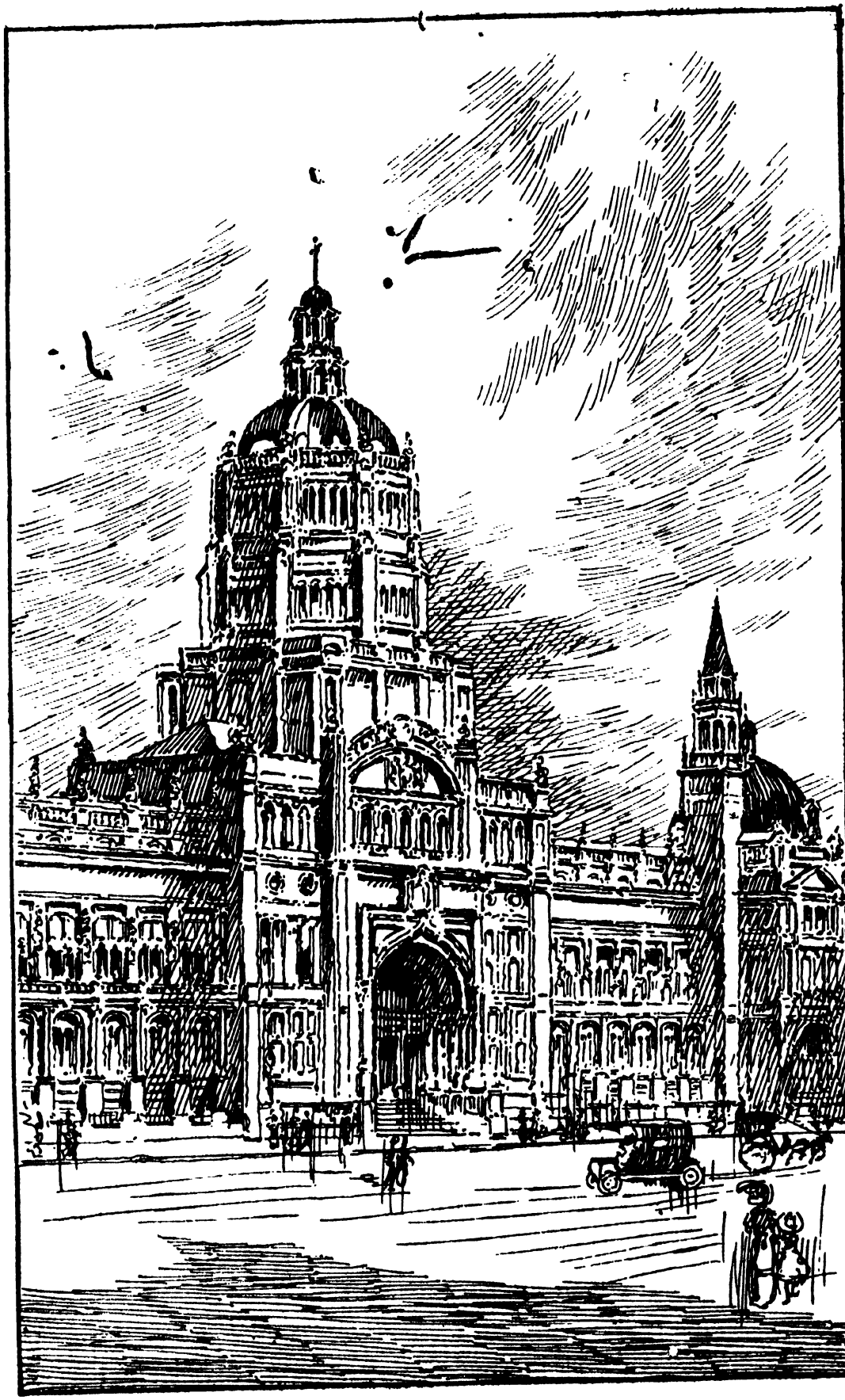
A Book for Little Readers

THE WONDERS OF LONDON

By EDITH L. ELIAS

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS

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THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, SOUTH KENSINGTON

LONDON PAST AND PRESENT

WILLIAM J. CLAXTON.

AUTHOR OF
"HISTORY WITHOUT HISTORY BOOKS" "LESSONS FROM NATURE'S WORKSHOP" "WORKERS IN NATURE'S WORKSHOP" "RAMBLES IN RURAL ENGLAND" ETC.

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS



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PREFACE

IN this little book I have endeavoured to sketch, from a boy's point of view, the history of London, from prehistoric down to modern times.

Profiting by friendly criticisms of several of my former works, I have tried to make the text bright and chatty throughout. Visual evidence, whenever available, is made the peg on which to hang a portion of my story. Imaginary tours around the statues, visits to the principal buildings of historical importance, and graphic descriptions of mediæval London scenes, tend to give a touch of realism to the text, and, it is hoped, will prove interesting to the reader.

For the leading historical events of the various periods I have consulted over a dozen authorities, but acknowledgments must be made chiefly to Sir Walter Besant's *London* and *Westminster*; Daniel Defoe's *The Journal of the Plague Year*; Chas. Hiatt's *Westminster Abbey*; and Sir Laurence Gomme's *The Making of London*.

W. J. C.

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT a wonderful place is London! A great writer once called it the "Keystone of the Arch of the Empire." Put into simple language, this figure of speech, as it is called, means that just as the keystone is the most important stone at the top of the arch, binding all the other stones together, so is London the most important part of our huge Empire on which the sun never sets.

No man living has been in every part of London; into every street and alley; round every crescent and square. We may think of this huge city as a number of very large towns, quite distinct from each other in many ways, and yet joined together into one mighty whole. There are the huge docks on the banks of the busy Thames which accommodate ships from many countries. There, too, are railways both above and below us as we walk along the crowded streets; deep down in the very bowels of the earth there is a network of tubes. Stately mansions, containing the homes of England's greatest, line the beautiful squares and parks in the west; while far away in the east, are some of the most squalid dens and hovels in the world.

There are many beautiful cities in the world besides London. Thus Paris contains its splendid boulevards and fine art galleries; Florence, its noble palaces and

marble fountains, together with some of the grandest statues in the world; Rome, its valuable museums and splendid ruins; New York, its tall buildings, some containing as many as fifty storeys; and so on.

But in London many of the wonders and special features of other cities are combined. It is a City of Cities, so to speak. There is the grand old Abbey and the historic Tower—weather-beaten old veterans, both of them, and each with a wonderful history to tell. There, too, are the majestic Law Courts, where justice is dispensed without fear or favour. The stately Houses of Parliament — the "Statue to England's Liberty and Freedom," as they have been described—overlook the busy Thames; and, not far away, the fine buildings of the London County Council, in which the government of the largest city in the world is carried on, may be found.

We may well understand that such a great and wonderful city as this must have a very eventful history, and in this little story we shall trace its history from very early times down to the present day. The history of London is, to a large extent, the history of England, and what applies to London, in many cases applies to the country as a whole. Let us watch the Inland Men of prehistoric times, encamped on the "din" or "dun" on which St Paul's Cathedral now stands, and searching among the thickets for berries. We shall see them rushing off to the coasts of Kent to join the Shore Men in their resistance to the landing of the Roman legions. We shall trace the effect of the Roman invasion on our city, and perhaps we shall go on a voyage of discovery, to see if we can find any Roman remains in the city. Later on we shall watch

those Norman builders constructing the Tower and Abbey, and still further on in London's history we shall stand in imagination with the notorious rebel, Jack Cade, by London Stone, and hear him addressing the mob before they set out to sack the city.

And many other things we shall note in London's story.

Perhaps when we have read this book we may take a bus-ride to some of the statues, monuments and public buildings we describe, and unveil some of London's pictures of the past.

CHAPTER I

PREHISTORIC LONDON

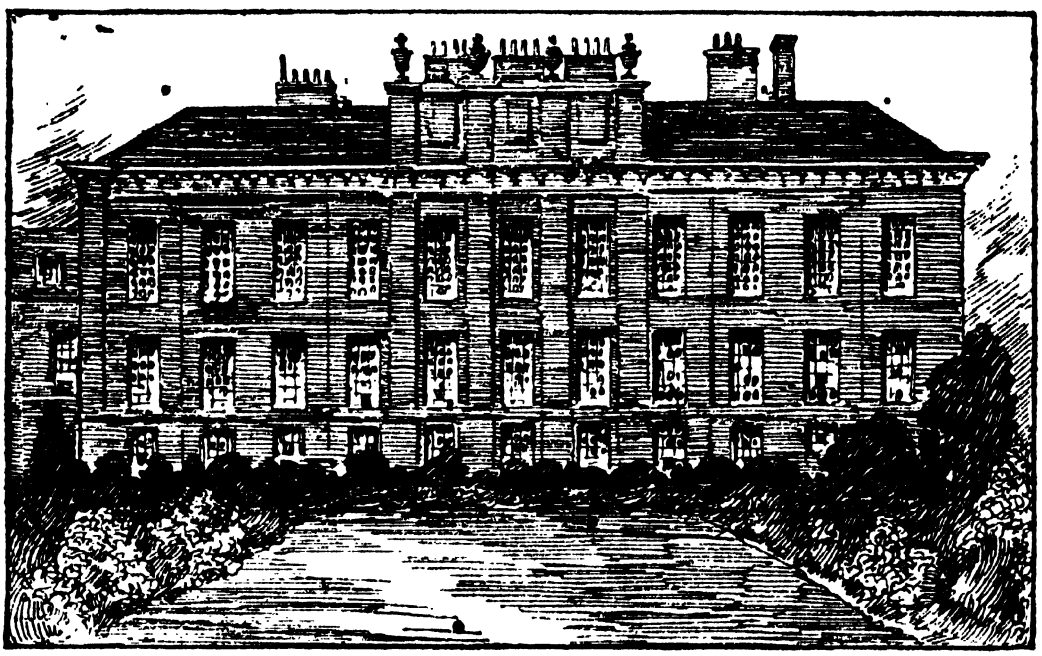
WE have said that the largest and most important city in the world must have a wonderful history. No place in the world can show a greater succession of historical events than the City of London, and it is therefore fitting that we should carefully trace its history, step by step, beginning at a very remote period, long before "history" was written, and going on until we reach modern times.

Probably some of my young readers may not know the meaning of the word "prehistoric." Just turn to your grammar-books and find the "List of Prefixes"; you will soon see that "pre" means *before*, and so "prehistoric" means *before history was recorded.*

Have you ever asked yourselves whence we derive our knowledge of the historical events in this country in these very early ages? Fossilized remains of ancient animals; weapons and tools dug out of the ground, where they have been buried in their earthy beds for centuries; ancient objects found in caves and cairns; war-vessels of long ago brought to light from the beds of old rivers or from burial mounds; and many other similar objects, all tell us something of the habits of the people, and the state of civilization in these islands in far-distant times.

I wonder if any of you have been to the new London

Museum in Kensington Palace.[1] If so, you may have seen some of these ancient objects. In Queen Mary's Gallery there are fragments of prehistoric animals, and several specimens of flint tools and domestic vessels which were used by the Celts of ancient Britain over two thousand years ago. Helmets worn by Celtic warriors have been excavated from the muddy bed



Kensington Palace

of the Thames. You may see several fine drawings of various types of men who are thought to have inhabited that part of Britain where London now stands.

One of the high officials of the London County Council, in an address to the London History Association, said that in excavations on the site of Drummond's Bank at Charing Cross, human remains

[1] While passing proofs of this book through the Press the announcement appears that Sir William Lever has made to the Museum authorities the munificent offer of Stafford House for the housing of their collection. It is expected that this will be removed there bodily early in 1914.

have been found which are known to be of men who lived at the same time that the hyena, hippopotamus and other prehistoric animals roamed about this country. He said that London had no real history before the Roman invasion, but it was well to know something of the place before them. The ordinary Londoner could still collect examples of flints and bronzes which told of the life of the people who lived on the site of London.

The only trustworthy information of prehistoric ages which we can obtain from books is that found in two volumes—the *Commentaries of Cæsar*, and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. The former book gave an account of the state of this country, and also neighbouring countries, such as Gaul, Hibernia and Scotia. It was written by the great Roman General, Julius Cæsar. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* was commenced in the reign of Alfred, and continued until the death of Stephen in 1154. Thus it covers a period of nearly three hundred years. Strange to say, the Chronicle breaks off in the middle of a sentence. This book may still be seen in the British Museum, but it is certain you would not understand the quaint English letters and words.

You will readily understand from this that it is extremely difficult to say with certainty what was the state of London and the condition of its people in these very early times. No one seems to have a clear idea when the ancient Cymri, or Welsh, and the Celts from Gaul, settled here; but it is quite evident that there was a fortified village at the junction of the Fleet river with the Thames, at the spot where St Paul's Cathedral now stands. This fort probably had earthen ramparts on the land side, as a protection from the warlike tribes

who lived around, for we know that there were at least forty-five tribes among the Celts, and they were generally at war with one another. The name "Londinium," from which our modern word "London" is obtained, explains the nature of the settlement. "Londinium" is a Latin word which was used to describe this place by the great Roman historian, Tacitus, who was born about one hundred years after Julius Cæsar came to this country. Possibly Tacitus derived this name from the British words "Llyn" or "Lin"=a pool; and "din" or "dun"=a fortified place, mount, hill or stronghold. Thus Londinium was a fortified place standing by the pool. We may picture the fort as standing on a hill—the modern Ludgate Hill—with the Thames and its tributaries running round three sides of it, and earthworks on the remaining side, while in the distance there were vast lagoons, morasses and forests.

Other historians tell us that the original name of London was "Caer-ludd"—that is, the city of Lud. We shall speak again of this ancient British king, who is said to have reigned in Britain just before the Romans came.

From our knowledge of these people we can form some idea of what "Llyn-dun" was like. Our pre-Roman ancestors probably fed on milk, honey, cereals and flesh; dressed in skins, or painted their bodies; lived in huts of timber and reeds; fashioned flints for weapons; worshipped false gods; and under the direction of the fierce Druids, offered human sacrifices.

Is it not difficult to realize as we walk up the busy Ludgate Hill, and look at the noble cathedral on the top of it, that this same hill was at one time simply



Ludgate Hill in 1900

an island in the centre of a desolate marsh, and peopled by those fierce-looking "painted men" whom we have described? What a contrast is there, too, in the active business men of modern times who throng the crowded streets, and the half-savage Britons clad in a few skins. Where the motor buses now rush along busy Fleet Street, a rapid little stream, the *Fleet*, ran down to the Thames, many feet below the modern level of this thoroughfare.

The people of Llyn-dun were Inland Men, and sometimes Shore Men would move up from the coasts and penetrate into their thickets in search of berries. The Inland Men would resent this, and a terrible hand-to-hand fight would follow. Should one of these savages overthrow his foe he would leap on the prostrate man and fasten his teeth in his throat after the manner of a snarling wolf. Of course we are speaking of the very early races. In somewhat later times the people became more civilized, and began to make some attempt at farming the land. They could also make good boats, and some of them knew how to smelt a few of the metals. They never appeared, however, to combine into one race of people, so as to form a nation. Instead, there were a number of *tribes*, quite distinct from each other, and having very little communication with each other, except in time of war.

CHAPTER II

ROMAN LONDON

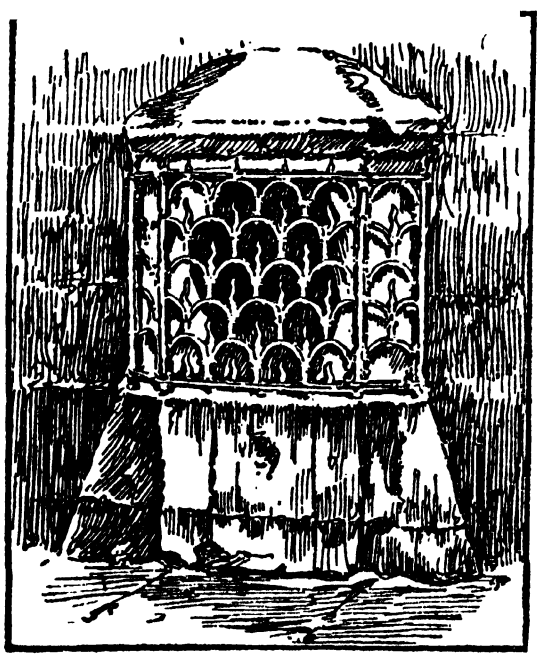
YOU have probably read in your history-books that about fifty-five years before the birth of Christ, Julius Cæsar conquered Gaul, the country which we now call France. As Cæsar was so near to this country it is not strange that he should have crossed the narrow sea. Some historians tell us that his invasion was due to the desire of the Romans to punish the Britons for helping their kinsmen in Gaul, for the people in the northern part of France, which we now call Brittany, were of the same race as those in these islands.

Whatever may have been the cause, we know that one day, nearly two thousand years ago, the Shore Men looked over the sea and saw a great fleet of boats approaching the shores of Kent, near where Deal now stands. For once in a way the Shore Men and Inland Men were united against a common foe, even those from Llyn-dun making their way over the marshes and through the forests down to the coast.

We have now come to the turning-point in the fortunes of our city, for, almost as soon as the Romans got a footing in the country, Llyn-dun began to make rapid progress. Thus we read that about one hundred years after Cæsar's first invasion, London was the chief trading centre of Britain. Merchants came from

foreign countries to buy and sell with our forefathers, and "Old Father Thames," even then, began to bear on his waters many busy little boats laden with merchandise. "It was a city," says Tacitus, "not, indeed, dignified by the title of a colony, but frequented by a large number of merchants, and by many ships entering its port."

Of course Llyn-dun, or Londinium, as we must now call it, was very soon fortified after falling into the hands of the Romans. At the time of the Conquest it was little more than an unwalled village. So the Romans built a great citadel or fortress, 750 yards long and 500 yards wide. It was quadrangular, with circular bastions at intervals, and the walls were wonderfully massive and thick.



The London Stone

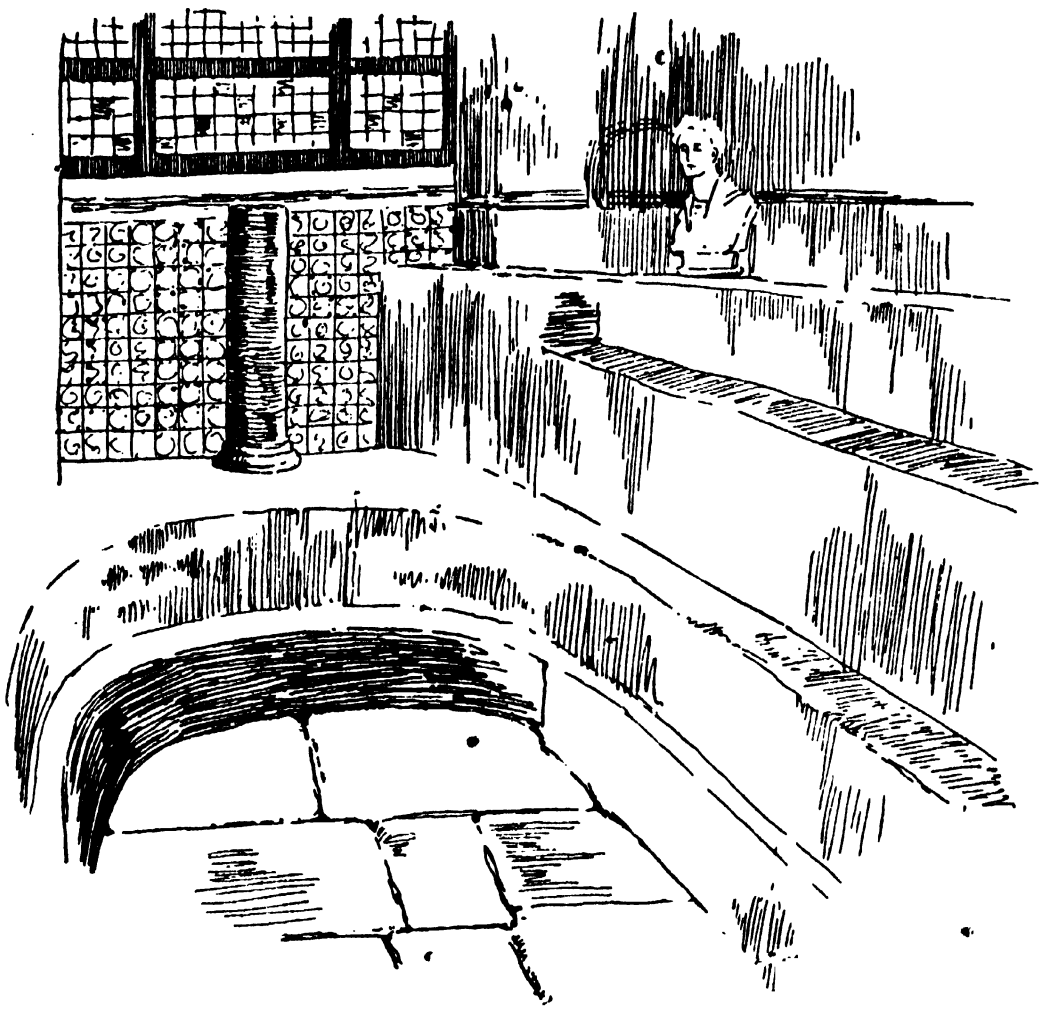
Relics of this wall are still to be seen. The next time you are in Cannon Street look out for the "London Stone," as it is called. This famous stone is built into the wall of St Swithin's Church. Nearly two thousand years ago this stone stood on one of the great Roman roads, and marked the boundary of the Roman city. Many hundreds of years later, when the bounds of the city had considerably grown, King Edward III made the stone the centre of the city's trade, for he granted a charter to the citizens

of London, which conferred upon them the privilege of forming markets up to a "seven miles radius of London stone."

But besides the citadel wall we find remains of another Roman wall, and that is the city wall itself. Strange to say, we know very little about this wall, although it was such a vast and important bit of work. We do not know who was responsible for the building of it—we do not even know the date, though it is now believed to have been about A.D. 360—that is, several hundred years after the citadel wall was built. The city by this time was grown rich and prosperous and the houses which had clustered round the fortress for protection at first were now stretched far to the north and west. As the power of the Roman name diminished it is thought that London citizens felt insecure, and in some sudden panic they decided to build a wall around their town. It is not built only of the carefully squared, quarried stone we find in most Roman walls, but largely of such materials as they could find to hand. They used the walls, columns and statues from temples, and monuments from the cemeteries; they tore down the massive walls from the citadel and the walls of the amphitheatre and used the stones; they took everything that would furnish building material. We have found bits of this wall still standing in many parts of the city. There is a splendid piece to be seen at Tower Hill, also in the Old Bailey and many other places.

A very great disaster befell Londinium when the Queen of the Iceni, Boadicea, led her troops against the Romans. The Roman general, Suetonius, was compelled to abandon London, and Boadicea's fierce tribesmen destroyed much of the good work which the

Romans had done. Tacitus refers to this episode as follows:—"Suetonius resolved to save the province as a whole by the sacrifice of Londinium. Unmoved by



Roman Bath in London

the tears and entreaties of the inhabitants, he gave the signal to march, receiving within his lines all that could come to him; those who remained behind, whether through weakness of sex or age, or from attachment to the place, were massacred by the enemy."

You know that Boadicea's revolt was soon put

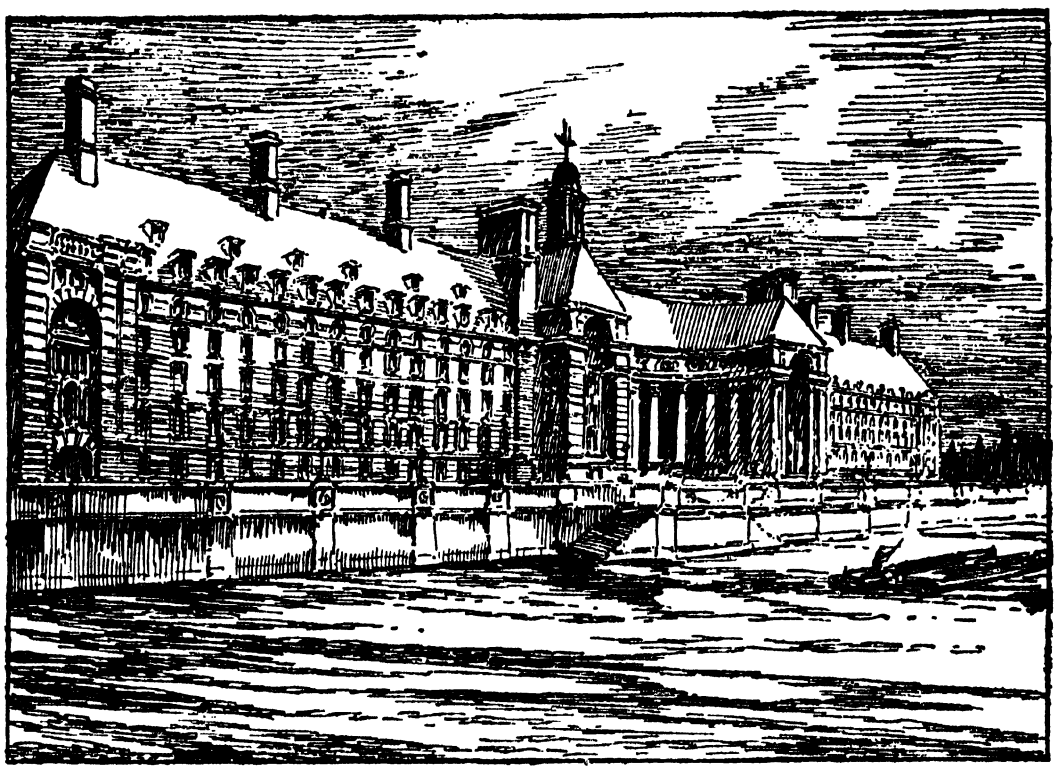
down, and the Queen is said to have died by her own hand. But it took many years to restore the camp and fortify the stronghold. The new and enlarged camp was now named *Augusta*, but this name was soon changed back to Londinium.

Have you read of the magnificent baths which the Romans constructed in different parts of the country? Near the Strand Tube Station there are the remains of a Roman bath, which is open at stated times for the inspection of visitors. It is just over twelve feet long and six broad, with a depth of nearly five feet.

The Romans were probably the first people to build a bridge over the Thames. This stood near the site of the present London Bridge. It was made of wood, and travellers coming up the famous Watling Street —one of the finest Roman roads running from the coast of Kent to Londinium—were able to continue their journey across the river by this narrow wooden bridge. Before passing over the bridge they would have to pay a toll, and, in pulling the money from their bags, it is quite possible that they occasionally dropped some coins, which rolled between the timbers into the river. When workmen were constructing the modern London Bridge they found many Roman coins in the bed of the river, some of which are in the British Museum.

When you visit the London Museum at Kensington you should certainly go into the Annexe, where a famous Roman galley is on view. In 1910 some workmen were engaged in digging the foundations of the County Hall—the fine offices of the London County Council, which stand on the south bank of the Thames at Westminster. During their operations they discovered a long oak Roman barge, a war-galley, which

had been pressed quite flat by the weight of the Thames mud above it. The barge was cunningly built with a keel about 50 feet long, and it was about 18 feet wide in its widest part. There was not one piece of metal of any description to be seen, and it is certain that if metal had been used it would have been



New County Hall, L.C.C.

there, for it would have lasted longer than wood. The barge was built entirely of oak. So rotten were the timbers when unearthed, that the wood felt like pulp when one touched it, and it could have been easily crushed between the fingers. It was feared that this interesting relic of our Roman invaders could not be preserved, but the authorities at the museum have ingeniously placed it in an imitation sandy river-bed where it is well protected, and it will doubtless attract visitors for many years to come.

CHAPTER III

SAXON LONDON

THE Romans stayed in Londinium for nearly four hundred years, but in the beginning of the fifth century they were compelled to withdraw their soldiers for the protection of their own country against their great and fierce enemies, the Goths. In A.D. 410 the Roman emperor Honorius released Londinium from its allegiance to Rome, and left it to look after itself.

It was a very bad day indeed for our city when the fine Roman soldiers were taken away. The Britons were quite unable to protect it, for though the Romans had taught many of them skilled trades, how to farm the land, how to build houses and lay out cities, who to make fine roads, and so on, they had not taught them how to make war. It had been their policy to draft away the best of the young Briton manhood to fight for the Romans in other lands, and the country was therefore deprived of much of its fighting strength.

The Britons had relied for so long a period upon their protectors that they had naturally forgotten the habit of self-reliance. There is a pitiful letter which they sent to the governor of Gaul soon after their protectors had left these shores: "The groans of the Britons. The barbarians drive us into the sea; the sea

drives us back on the swords of the barbarians; so we have nothing left but the dreadful choice of being drowned or butchered."

For about one hundred and fifty years after the Romans departed there is almost a blank in the history of our city. You may remember that the Saxons landed on our coasts about the year 449—that is, about forty years after the Romans left. We are not concerned here with the details of the Saxon immigration nor of the gradual way in which they drove the Britons from the cities into the Welsh mountains. London was one of the last places in which the Britons made a stand, and the Saxons had to storm the fine earthworks erected by the Romans many times before the city fell. At last it was captured, but how badly it was treated! The strong walls were not kept in repair, and they began to decay; the beautiful Roman villas, baths, temples and statues were destroyed; bridges were pulled down; roads were never "made up," so that they soon became worn through, and the paved streets were turned into muddy lanes.

The Saxons seemed to have a spite against towns. They liked the open life of the fields and wastes, and very seldom would they consent to live in a town. We know, too, that during the early part of their occupation of this country they were fierce heathens, and we also know that during the latter part of the Romans' stay Christianity was making rapid progress. Thus we are told that the Romans had erected many beautiful temples to the unseen God which the Saxons took delight in burning to the ground. It appears that the Saxons had no use for London whatever. Even their kings were not crowned within its walls, but

at *king's stones*, such as Kingston, some distance away.

In the year 597 Pope Gregory sent Augustine to these islands. A famous bishop named Mellitus carried on his noble work of preaching the Gospel to the Saxons, and he baptised Sebert, the king of the East Saxons. King Sebert built fine churches in which to worship the true God, and two of these churches are said to have stood on the sites of the present St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey. Mellitus was made Bishop of London, and under his guidance the city made progress.

Soon after many of the Saxons had become Christians new foes appeared on these shores. These were the bold sea-rovers, the Danes. You have read many times of their fierce raids, and their terrible treatment of the good Christian missionaries and priests. Just as the early Saxons harried the Britons, so in turn did the Danes harass them.

The Danes made several attempts upon London because of its important position on the Thames, and also because they were very keen on plundering any town that was rich.

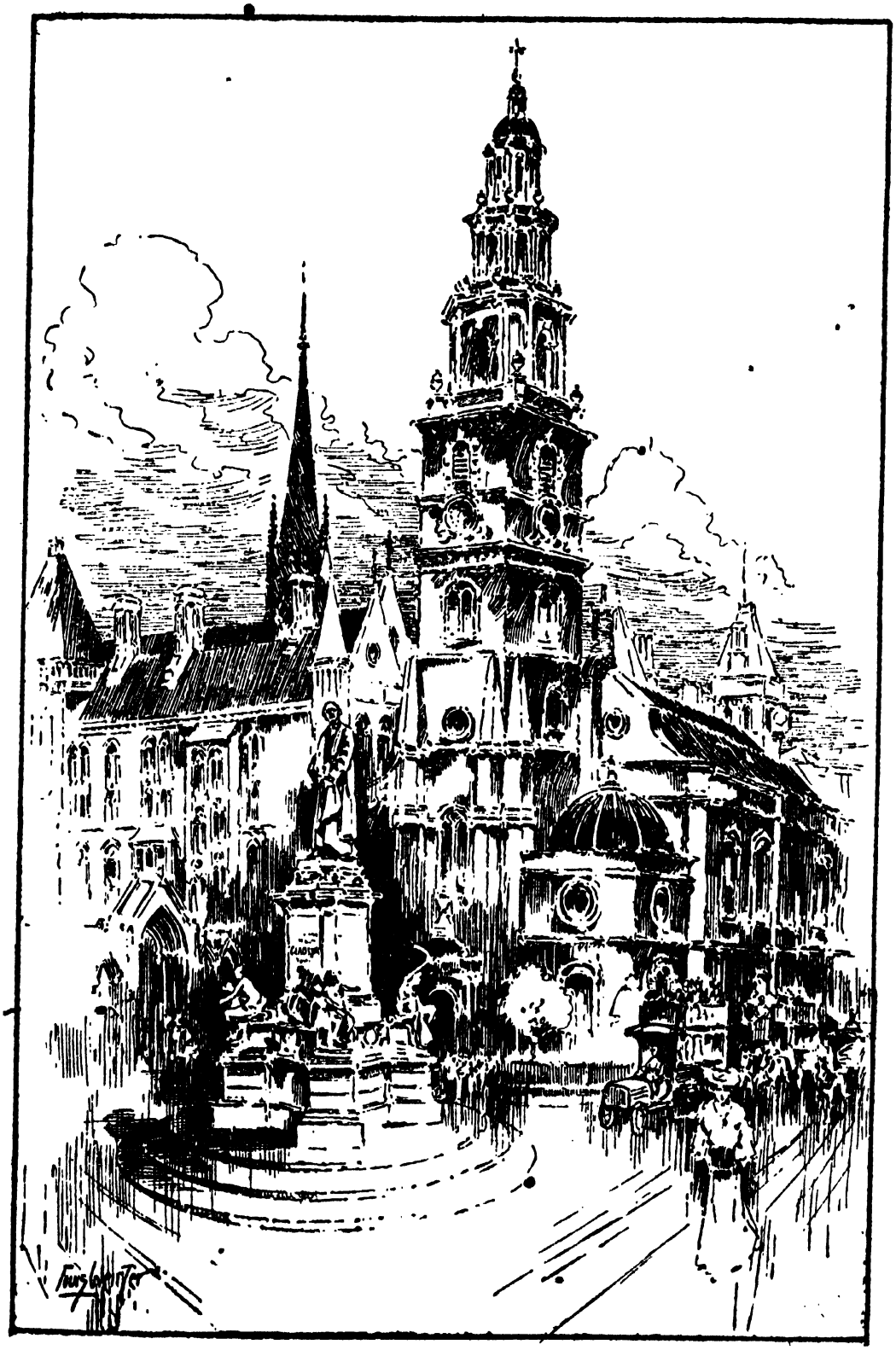
We learn, however, from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that the city held its own during the terrible struggle. One passage in the Chronicle says: "Oft they fought against the city of London, but praise be to God that it stands sound, and they there ever met with ill fare." Not until the whole country fell into the hands of the Danes did London submit. Even then the Danes did not live actually in the city, but in settlements around it.

London did not make much progress under the war-

like Danes. When Alfred the Great commenced his long struggle with his fierce foes he soon drove them from London, and at once began to rebuild the walls which had been allowed to decay. About this time London became the capital of England, a position which it has ever since held.

Those of you who have been for a walk along the towing-path of the river Lea, as far as Tottenham, will have seen the river on which Alfred showed his great skill as a general. The Danes had sailed up the Thames with the firm intention of capturing London, but they found Alfred's forces too strong for them, and just before they reached the city walls they turned their fleet of war-galleys up the Lea, and sailed away to Ware in Hertfordshire. Here they intended to pass the winter, and prepare for the coming great battle with the Saxons. Just before their great fleet was ready to sail back to the Thames, Alfred employed hundreds of men to make three channels or canals leading from the main river, and so the Lea was split up into four branches near the marshes where Tottenham and Hackney now stand. The water above the channels came down from Ware to fill the new branches, so that the upper part of the river became very shallow, and the Danish fleet was stranded. Alfred set out from London to attack the Danes, but he found their camp empty, and the galleys lying deserted in the mud. A few years ago one of these Danish boats was unearthed from the marshes near the Tottenham Gasworks.

We now hear very little of London until the year 1017, when Canute became King. Under this wise ruler many Danish traders settled in the city, and made it a great trading centre. The size and importance of



St Clement Danes Church and the Gladstone Monument

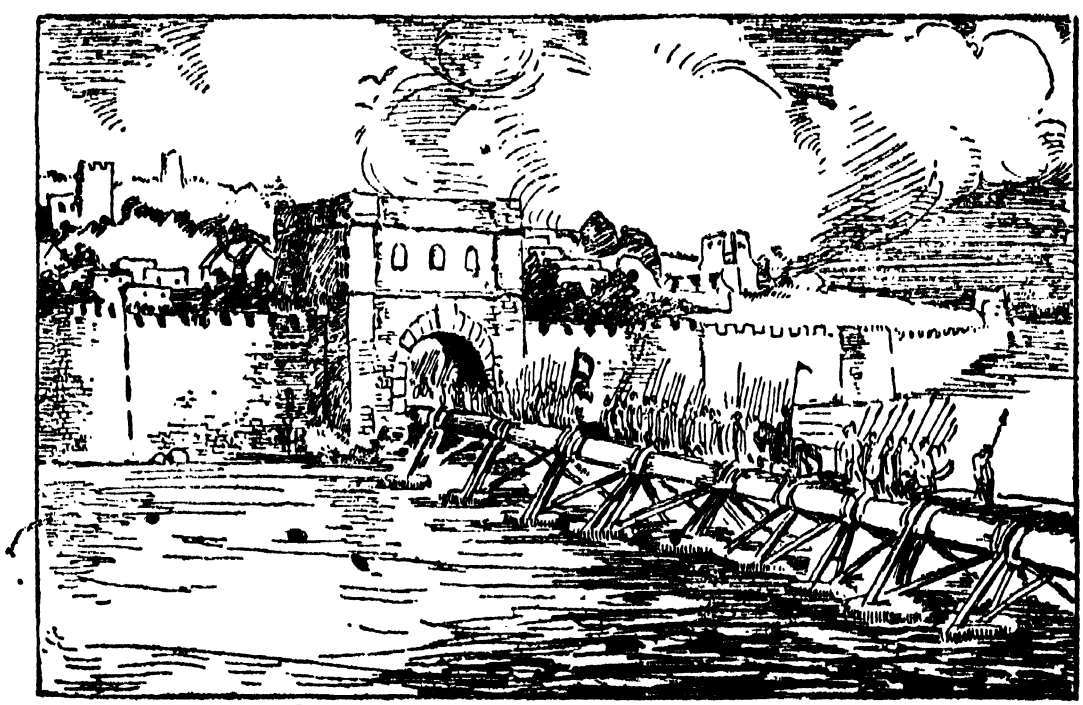
London at this time may be gathered from the fact that Canute made the city pay one-fifth of the tax money levied on the country.

Traces of the Danish occupation of London may still be seen in the church of St Clement Danes which stands in the Strand. This church stood near Aldwych, which was an important Danish village. It is said to have been built on the site of the London Danes' burial-ground, and here Harold Harefoot, the king who succeeded Canute, is stated to have been buried. You may have read that Harold's body was dug up by the orders of his cruel brother, Hardicanute, and thrown into a morass. The London Danes recovered the body, and reverently interred it in their own burial-ground at St Clement Danes.

CHAPTER IV

NORMAN LONDON

ONCE again we have to deal with the invasion of a foreign people and its effect on the history of our city. You have read that William the Conqueror, having defeated Harold's army at Senlac, marched to London and received the Crown of England from the Archbishop of York on Christmas Day 1066.



London Bridge in the Early Norman Period

William's army does not appear to have marched from Senlac directly upon London, but to have subdued the south-eastern and southern parts of the country, right from Romney in Kent to Winchester in Hampshire. Had William decided to march straight up to

London he would probably have found a strongly fortified city to be overcome, for many of the defeated Saxons hastily fled to the capital. This astute King soon saw that London was of the greatest importance to him from a military point of view, and it was also a great trading centre. Would it not be better, he thought, to conquer all the surrounding country, and then discuss terms of peace with the citizens of London, rather than to storm the forts and batter down many of the fine buildings.

His plans were admirably carried out, and the sheriff and earldormen of the city opened negotiations with the Conqueror which resulted in the crowning of the King at Westminster, and the granting of a royal charter to the citizens. In the charter William promised to maintain the rights of the city and protect the citizens in a fit and proper manner. This ancient charter is still in existence, and runs as follows:—

"William king greets William bishop and all the burghers within London, French and English; and I do you to wit that I will that ye be all lawworthy that were in King Edward's day. And I will that every child be his father's heir after his father's day, and I will not suffer that any man offer any wrong to you. God keep you."

It will be hard for you to make sense out of this quaint wording, but it is a good example of what ancient charters were like. Besides this charter all the Norman kings gave charters to the citizens of London, conferring similar promises and privileges.

In Norman times the population of England was



William of Normandy entering London

estimated at about two million people, of which about one-eighth were Normans. London contained between thirty and forty thousand souls.

Suburbs began to be built toward the end of the Norman rule. Hitherto the city had been surrounded by dense woods and thickets, especially toward Middlesex, which county was almost entirely occupied by the great "Forest of Middlesex." In the reign of Henry III part of this forest was cleared, and the city was extended toward the northern heights.

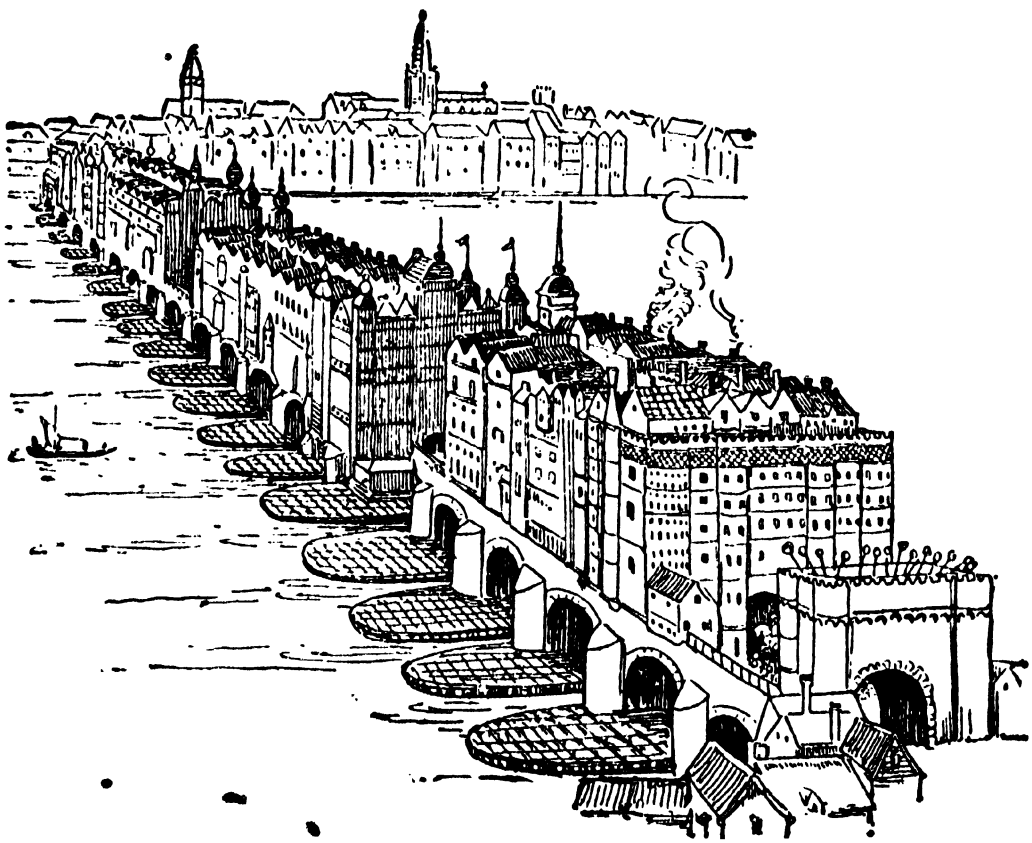
With the rapid increase in the number of people there was not a sufficient water-supply, and we read that pipes were laid to bring the water down from Tyburn Brook. Most of the infectious diseases of early times were entirely due to the insanitary condition of the water, and thousands of people died every year from typhoid fever and leprosy.

You know that that portion of London known as the City is now ruled by a Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Common Councillors. The first Lord Mayor of London is said to have been Fitz Alwin, who was thus honoured by being made London's chief citizen in 1193.

You must not think that London, even after its great progress in Norman times, was in anything like the condition in which it is to-day. The Tower of London, which was commenced by the Conqueror, stood just outside the eastern boundary, and the western boundary was near the foot of Ludgate Hill. It was quite a long and pleasant country walk from this boundary to the neighbouring little city of Westminster.

Could we have seen some of London's citizens in Norman times we should have found them wearing dresses of very rich material. Their shoes were very

long, and curled up at the toes; their dresses were of the most curious shapes; their hair was worn in long flowing curls, until, in 1100, Archbishop Anselm ordered that all persons should have their hair cropped so that their ears and eyes could be seen. They would have only two meals a day: dinner about nine o'clock, and supper at six in the afternoon. Beautiful



Old London Bridge

ornaments of gold and jewellery were worn by men as well as by women.

The trade of London made great strides under Norman rule. Those who belonged to the same trade, or craft, banded together and formed themselves into craft guilds, which were somewhat like our modern trade unions. The education of the rich was gradually

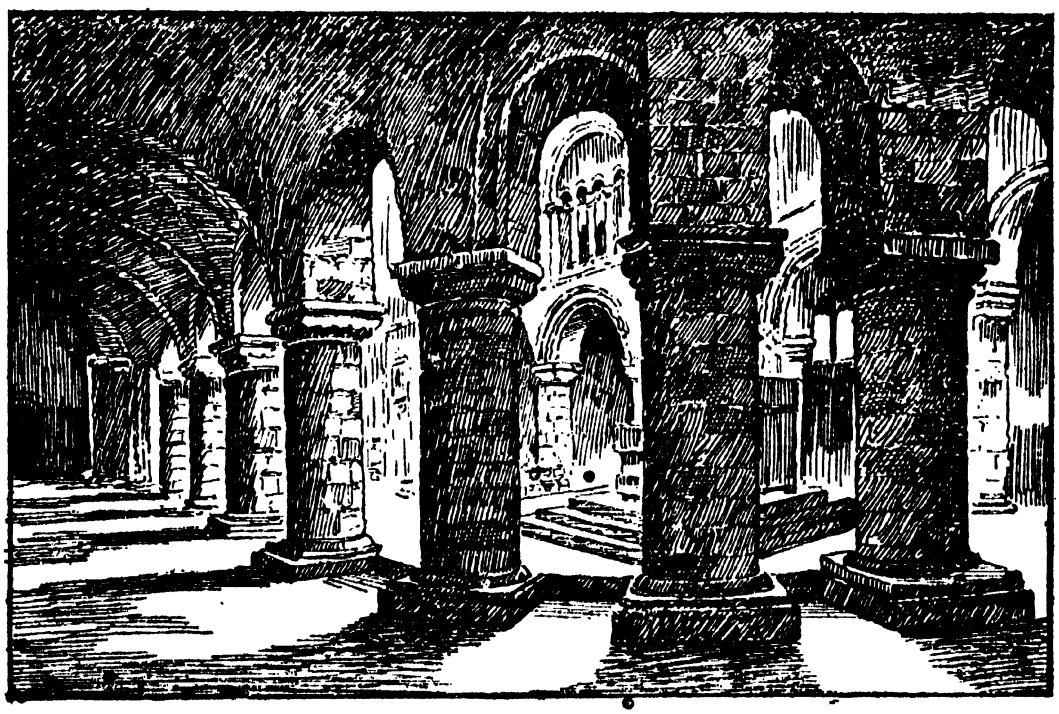
extended to the poor. Of course there were no schools such as we have nowadays, but before the Normans came to England there had never been a chance for the children of poor people to have any schooling at all.

In Norman times we see the power of the middle classes and the importance of the trading classes greatly increasing. The great prominence of the merchants at this time is shown by the fact that the Lord Mayor of London was one of the twenty-five guardians who were solemnly appointed to see that King John kept the promises he made in Magna Charta.

London received a severe blow in the reign of Henry III. The chief baron of England at that time was Simon de Montfort. He had married the King's sister, and was, during the early part of his life, a great supporter of Henry. In time, however, he became quite tired of the King's system of ruling the country according to the ideas of a few foreign favourites, and he did not hesitate to speak out very strongly against this system. The people in the towns sided with him. He was known as "Sir Simon the Righteous," and the citizens of London prevailed on him to take up arms against the King. At first he met with great success at the battle of Lewes in 1264, but not without the loss of nearly four thousand of his brave London soldiers! How deeply the citizens of London hated the royal family is shown by their treatment of the Queen when war first commenced. We read that she wished to go by water to Windsor, but the Londoners pelted her barge with mud and tried to sink it. For some distance along the river they booed and hooted her, and when the barge reached London Bridge they would not let it go any farther.

Simon was now head of the Government, and to him we owe the first Parliament which met in London at Westminster in 1265. He ordered each city and large town to send two representatives. This Parliament consisted of peers, bishops, abbots, knights and citizens representing their various towns, and was similar in many respects to the Parliament of to-day.

But just as the good Simon had made these great reforms his power began to wane. One of his chief



Saint Bartholomew the Great

supporters, the Earl of Gloucester, deserted him, and joined the King's son, who had escaped from prison. The Londoners were in a sorry plight, for they had all along been the chief supporters of the Earl. Even now they might have gained a splendid victory when the rival armies met near Evesham, but, owing to the treachery of the royalists, who caused themselves to

appear as friends of Simon on the battlefield, the battle was lost.

You may be quite sure that the King took his revenge on London when he was restored to power. Its charter was taken from it; no citizen was allowed to own a war-horse; and the enormous sum of nearly



Lambeth Palace

a quarter of a million of money had to be paid to the Crown. This was a huge sum, considering that the purchasing power of money in those days was nearly ten times as great as it is to-day, and that there were far fewer people to pay it. Indeed, there were only

about half as many people in the whole of England during the reign of Henry III as there now are in London and its suburbs.

We must not forget one other important fact in connexion with the history of our city during Norman times. In 1208 the first bridge of stone was erected across the Thames. This was called London Bridge, and since then this great bridge has never lost its importance as a highway for trade.

Possibly many of you have read of the different styles of architecture which prevailed at various times in the history of our country. That known as Norman architecture was noted for its great strength. Many of the castles had walls of immense thickness, and the arches that upheld the monasteries and churches were round. The doorways all had round arches supported by single pillars. There are not very many examples of Norman architecture left in London. The best specimens are to be seen in St John's Chapel, which forms part of the Tower of London, and indeed the Tower itself is a fine specimen of a Norman stronghold; the Church of St Bartholomew the Great, in Smithfield; Lambeth Palace; the Round Church in the Temple; the crypt of Bow Church, and St Ethelburga's Church in Bishopsgate. In most of these places, though, only fragments of Norman work remain.

CHAPTER V

MEDIÆVAL LONDON

POSSIBLY many of you will say when you read the heading of this chapter: "Whatever does that curious-looking word 'Mediæval' mean?" It refers to the period of history of which we generally speak as the "Middle Ages"—that is, that period between the reign of the early Norman kings and the accession of the Tudor sovereigns, which began in 1485 with Henry VII.

London received many terrible blows during this time. In 1349 the dreadful Black Death made its appearance in this country, into which it had been carried from Asia. This sickness was almost as bad as "The Plague" itself, which devastated our city just over three hundred years later. The narrow, filthy streets; the insanitary condition of the towns; the impure water, and many other causes, combined to spread the disease very rapidly, and the towns suffered far more than the country. It is said that over one hundred thousand London citizens died with it, and, after the "Death" had disappeared, the population was given as only fifty thousand.

But not only did the people suffer from the terrible hardships of this disease, for famine followed. There was no one to farm the land. An old writer says: "The sheep and cattle roamed through the fields, and

there was none to drive them; they died, and no one buried their carcasses, so that they rotted and poisoned the air with their smells." All the large towns began to feel the want of agricultural and farm produce such as wheat, butter, eggs, potatoes, and so on. Bread was very expensive, and the poor were quite unable to buy it, so that many of them starved to death.



Old Street in London

This terrible sickness, together with the great poverty of the people—which was, in the main, caused by the "Death"—was to make a deep mark on the country for many years to come, and was one of the causes leading up to the rebellion of the peasants about thirty years later. John Ball, a Kentish priest, was one of the ringleaders of the rebels, and he held public meetings in the towns of the east of England, telling the people to free themselves from the tyranny of their masters, and also teaching them that all men were equal. There is no doubt that the poor were very badly treated then. To add to their troubles, the King

ordered all persons over the age of fifteen to pay a poll tax, and this caused many of the poorer people of London to join with those of Kent and Essex in resisting the payment of the tax.

No doubt you have read of Wat Tyler's march to London in 1381 at the head of 100,000 Kentish peasants armed with all manner of weapons. What a terrible march this was! On their way the peasants set fire to the houses of the rich, and slew some of the chief men. They were a disorderly mob, and their leaders found it very difficult to keep them in hand. The King shut himself up in the Tower. It was hoped that they would not be able to pass into the city, but the city mob opened the gates and went out to meet them. It is said that they marched to the Palace of Savoy, where the great Duke of Lancaster lived, and burnt it to the ground.

King Richard did not know what to do for the best. He was only a boy of fifteen dependent upon his advisers, people older than himself; but he took the matter into his own hands, and promised to meet the people on the following day and hear their troubles.

The young King kept his word, and met the rebels at Mile End, where the men of Essex were encamped. Richard was extremely brave to face this huge and angry mob. "I am your King, my good people," said he, "what will ye that I shall do for you?" "We will that you set us and our lands free for ever, and that we be no longer serfs," came the reply. "That I will, indeed," replied the King; "go back to your homes and all shall be well."

This advice was followed by some of the rebels, but the remainder broke into the Tower and beheaded the Archbishop on Tower Hill. The King again rode out



Richard II and Wat Tyler at Smithfield

and met them at Smithfield, and at this meeting Wat Tyler, their leader, was stabbed by the Mayor of London. Tyler brought this upon himself partly by his own coarse rudeness to the King.

Instantly thousands of bows were bent, and the young King was at that moment very near to death. With wonderful presence of mind he rode out from his nobles and faced the angry rebels, saying: "What need ye, my masters? Follow me, I will be your captain." This brave bearing saved his life, for Englishmen admire bravery in anyone, and the arrows were returned to their quivers. The rebels dispersed, and went to their homes. King Richard rode back to his palace, and soon after an army marched through Kent and Essex, hanging all the principal rebels, and torturing hundreds of thousands of the poor peasants.

With all these plagues, pestilences, famines, rebellions, and so on, we may imagine that London was a sorry place to live in during the Middle Ages. This was not altogether the case, however. We have only to read Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* to see that people in those times knew how to enjoy themselves. They had many merry holidays. May Day, and May Day revels, were duly celebrated; saints' days were observed; large fairs were held; tournaments were of frequent occurrence; royal processions took place through the principal London streets; and other excuses for merry-making were eagerly made.

Had we lived in those times we should have seen acted in the open air dramas founded on stories taken from the Bible, and which were called "Mystery Plays."

London at this time was somewhat similar to some

pretty country town at the present time. In place of rows and rows of houses all very much alike, as they are in many of the suburbs to-day, nearly every house was different from its neighbour. In the better-class districts each house was "self-contained"—that is, it stood in its own grounds, and was not joined on to any other house. Even in the poorer districts most of the cottages had gardens. Fancy a house in Cheapside, Smithfield, or London Wall having a nice open garden filled with fruit trees! It does not seem possible now. On the outskirts of London there were quiet, peaceful pasturelands, and, in about ten minutes, most of the citizens could walk into the green fields, from whatever part of the city they lived in. One of the most delightful promenades was that along the Strand, which joined the City to Westminster. Country mansions were here to be seen with gardens running down to the river, which was not nearly as muddy-looking in those days as now.



Lady and Gentleman of Fourteenth Century

In the Middle Ages there lived one of London's great citizens of whom you have all heard. This was Sir Richard Whittington, better known to you as Dick Whittington. We will not speak of his adventures with his wonderful cat, but it is well to recall that his great perseverance and strict attention to duty caused him to be knighted by Henry V, after his return from Agincourt, and also to be made Lord Mayor of London three times. It is a great honour to be Lord Mayor

once, and the people must have thought highly of him to elect him as their chief citizen three times. We read that he lent Henry V a great deal of money to carry on the French wars. Probably he is best remembered by his great acts of kindness to the poor. When you visit the Royal Exchange you must look for a picture which shows Whittington giving alms to the poor people.

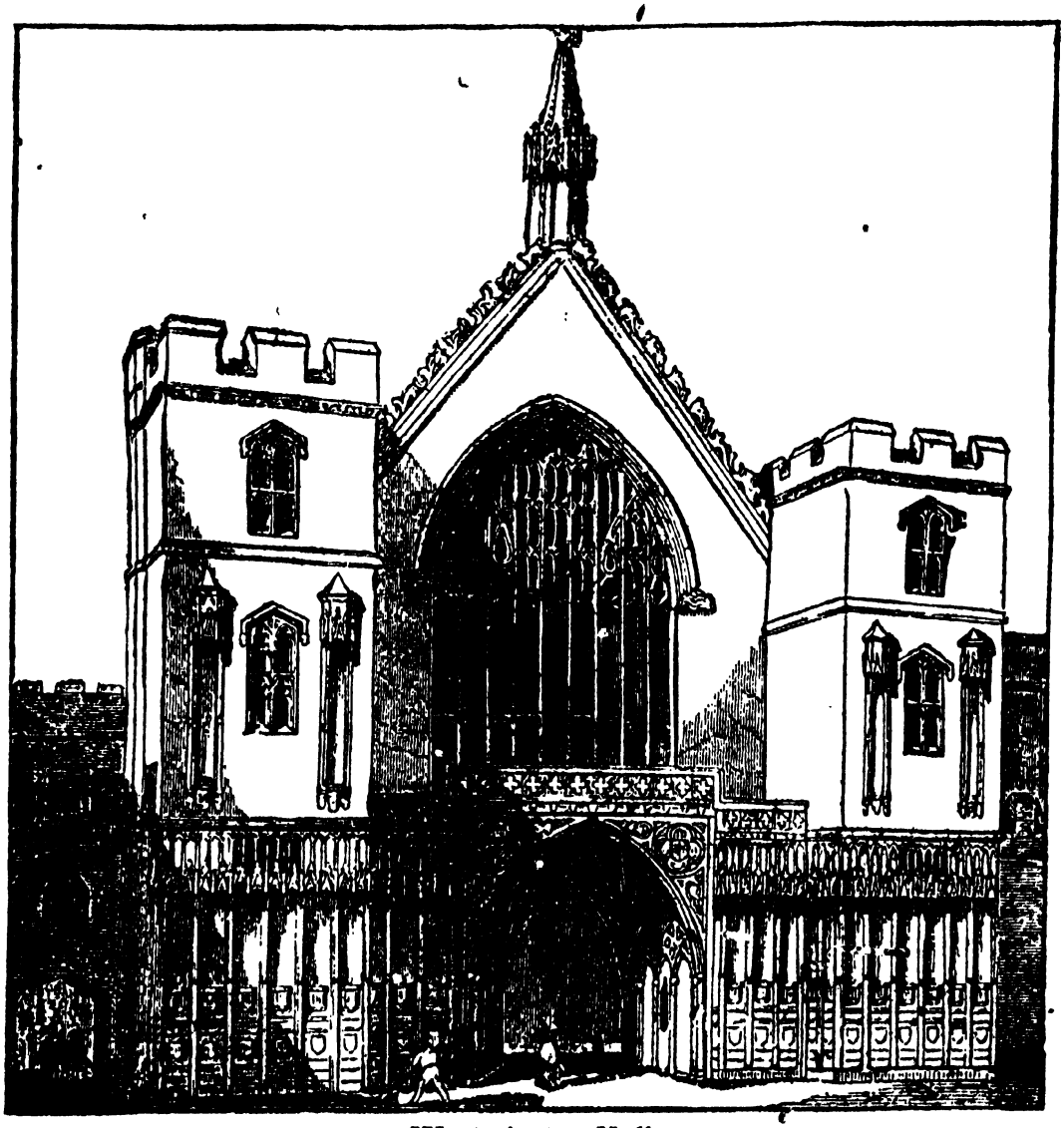
In Mediæval times a number of trading centres were established in the City, and the same trades are associated with certain of the districts to-day. Thus Eastcheap was the centre of the mercers; Lombard Street, of the moneylenders; Paternoster Row, of the stationers; Cornhill, of the corn merchants.

We must not leave the history of our city at this time without referring to the rebellion of Jack Cade, which took place in the reign of Henry VI, about seventy years after the rebellion of which we have already spoken. This time the Kentish people were joined by those of Surrey, and thirty thousand of them marched to London to present a paper to the Government entitled "The Demand of the Men of Kent." They named several grievances in this paper, but the Council of the King, who considered it, took no notice of their troubles. Cade, therefore, led the mob through the City, and burnt and plundered many of the houses. Henry escaped to Kenilworth. The citizens of London did not care to have this mob treating their city in the same way that Wat Tyler had done years before, and they offered a stout resistance. The fight lasted seven or eight hours, after which Cade persuaded the mob to leave the city and return to their homes.



A Mystery Play

Many of the principal examples of Mediæval structure were destroyed by the Great Fire of London in 1666, but there are still a few good specimens left. The most important are Westminster Hall; the



Westminster Hall

Lollards' Tower at Lambeth Palace; the hall of Lincoln's Inn; the Church of Holy Trinity, in the Minories, where the graves of Hubert de Burgh and the Duke of Buckingham are to be found; and the Abbey Church at Westminster. A few years ago a

fine specimen of Mediæval architecture—the historical Crosby Hall, in Bishopsgate Street—was taken down and re-erected at Chelsea. This was at one time Richard III's palace, and here the murder of the young princes was probably planned.

CHAPTER VI

TUDOR LONDON

IN the history of our city from very early times up to the Tudor Period, we have seen that London was looked upon chiefly as an important military stronghold. But during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries there was a great development, and by the time of Queen Elizabeth London had become the foremost commercial town in the country, a position it has held ever since. The wealth of City merchants was the envy and wonder of foreign traders; and though many cities in England decayed, yet London continually grew. About this time we find a famous Italian describing London's wealth as follows:—"In one single street, named the Strand, leading to St Paul's, there are fifty-two goldsmiths' shops, so rich and full of silver vessels, great and small, that in all the shops of Milan, Rome, Venice, and Florence put together, I do not think there are to be found so many, or of the magnificence to be seen in London."

During this period the treasures of the Indies were brought to this country in our own ships, and not by the ships of foreign nations, as had hitherto been the case. In 1599 a number of London merchants banded themselves together for the purpose of fitting out a small fleet of ships to trade with the Indies, and, during the following year, Queen Elizabeth signed the first charter of the famous East India Company.

TUDOR LONDON

Though our city was at this time by far the most important place in Britain, yet it was quite unlike modern London. There were walls still to be seen around the City, but the suburbs were rapidly growing, and the City began to be quite distinct in many ways from Greater London, as it is to-day. The common houses were made of wood, and had gable-ends. The streets were very narrow, and as each storey of a house jutted over the one beneath it, in some cases people could lean from their bedroom windows and join hands with friends in bedrooms on the opposite side of the road. It is recorded that crows and ravens croaked at pleasure in the streets, and these birds were looked upon with great favour, as they were good scavengers, and kept the streets of the city free from filth, after the manner of Egyptian storks of to-day. There were houses on each side of the Strand, and each house had a long garden attached to it, which, on one side of the street, stretched right down to the Thames. Street lighting was in a very backward state. Lanterns were hung from the tops of church steeples so that people might find their way. It was a pleasant country walk



London Watchman: Time of Elizabeth

from the City to Holborn, and sick people were advised by their doctors to "try the air of Smithfield."

Had we lived in London during Elizabethan times, we could often have seen the Queen and her courtiers riding on horseback down the Green Lanes to the Epping Woods, and the Royal Chase at Enfield. At such times the 'prentices would rush out of the shops and give the Queen a lusty cheer. The quaint street cries



Costumes at the time of Queen Elizabeth

were quite a feature of this period. Addison, in one of his famous *Letters to the Spectator*, says of them: "There is nothing which more astonishes a foreigner and frightens a country squire, than the Cries of London. My good friend Sir Roger often declares that he cannot get them out of his head, or go to sleep for them, the first week he is in town." For miles and miles the "herb wives" would walk, crying out their wares. We have, still, a relic of this

in suburban London, where the "lavender-sellers" sing their curious song:

"Will you buy my blooming lavender?
Fresh blooming lavender;
Who'll buy my lavender?"

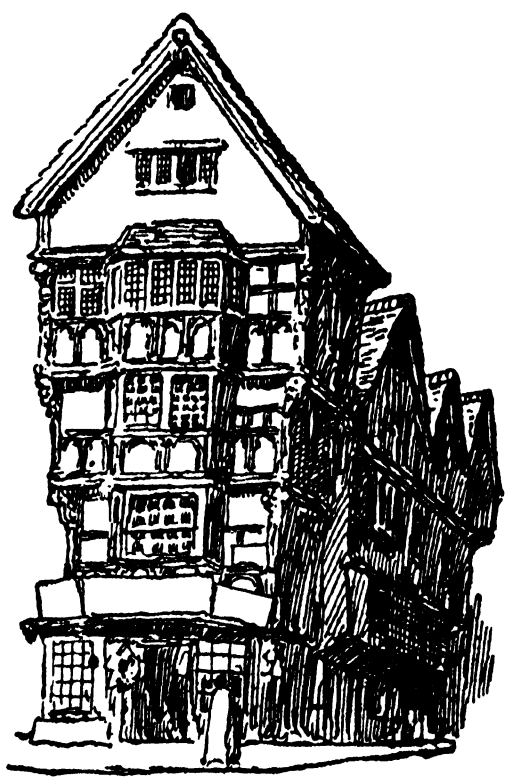
Some of these famous Cries are recorded in books of nursery rhymes, such as:

"If I'd as much money as I could spend,
I never would cry 'Old chairs to mend.'"

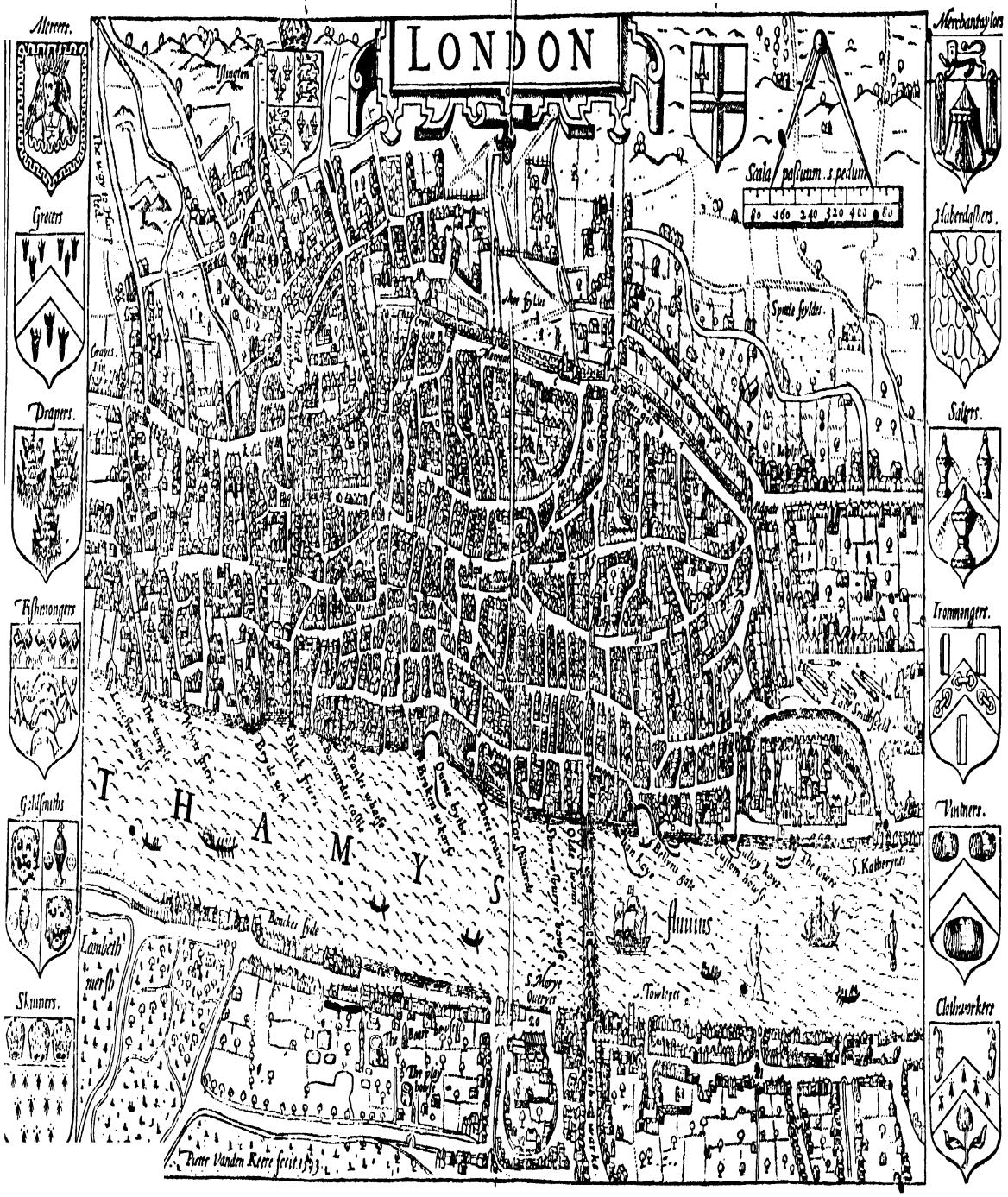
and we all remember the rhyme of the toy-seller:

"Young lambs to sell, young lambs to sell,
If I'd as much money as I could tell,
I never would cry, 'Young lambs to sell!'"

We cannot leave Elizabethan times without remarking on the beautiful architecture of the City. Gothic architecture with its pointed arches, its delicate pillars, its "ribbed vaulting," and flying buttresses, had taken the place of the heavy Norman style, with its ponderous pillars, round arches and tiny windows. A style of building which is known as "Elizabethan" came into vogue during the reign of the last of the Tudors. Half-timbering was used, and wide, flat arches came into fashion, together with latticed and mullioned windows. Stone began to take the place of wood for



An Elizabethan Town House. Old houses built about 1560, corner of Fleet St and Chancery Lane



OF ONE OF THE ABOVE 12 COMPANIES IS THE L.D. MAYOR OF THE CYTE COMENLY CHOSEN

a. Bushopsgate streete
b. Papie
c. Allhallowes in the wall
d. S. Taphyns
e. Sylver streete
f. Aldermanburye
g. Barbicen
h. Alderſgate ſtreete
i. Charterhouſe
k. Holborne Conduit
l. Chauncery lane
m. Temple barr.
n. Holbourn
o. Grayes Inn Lane
p. S. Androwes
q. Newgate
r. S. Iones
ſ. S. Nic ſhambds
t. Cheap ſyde
u. Bucklers burye
w. Brodeſtreete
x. The ſtockes
y. The Exchannge
z. Cornehill
[No. 1 not in Map]
Calmanſtreete
Baſſings hall
Hounſditche
Leaden hall
Gratious ſtreete
2. Hennage houſe
3. Fanchurche
4. Marke lane
5. Minchyn lane
6. Paules
7. Eaſtchenpe
13. Fleetſtreete
14. Fetter lane
15. S. Dunſtons
16. Themes ſtreete
17. London ſtone
18. Olde Baylye
19. Clerkenwell
20. Wincheſter houſe
21. Battle bridge
22. Bermadſey ſtreete
Ioannes Norden Anglus deſcripſit anno 1593

middle-class houses and suburban mansions, while timber-frames filled in with brick were also employed. Some of the principal buildings had lofty and elegant halls with beautifully decorated walls. Rich tapestries hung round the rooms. Straw mattresses were replaced by feather-beds, and downy pillows and blankets became common. The dress of the merchants was very extravagant, and at Court, the fops and dandies entered into rivalry over the costliness of their apparel. One poet describes this extravagance in these lines:

> "*A farm in shoe-strings edged with gold,*
> *And spangled garters worth a copyhold;*
> *A hose and doublet which a lordship cost;*
> *A gaudy cloak, three manors' price almost;*
> *A beaver band and feather for the head,*
> *Priced at the church's tithe, the poor man's bread.*"

Many Elizabethan buildings were destroyed by the Great Fire of London in 1666, but there are still a



The old Star Chamber, Westminster

few specimens of this architecture in existence in London. The chief are St James's Palace, where the

Entrance Gateway and Tower, together with the Chapel Royal and Presence Chamber, are still left as examples of Tudor architecture. One or two Elizabethan houses in Holborn are in strange contrast to



Staple Inn, Old Tudor Buildings in Holborn

the modern buildings. Lincoln's Inn and Holland House also contain specimens of Tudor work, as well as parts of Henry VII's Chapel at Westminster Abbey. The most aristocratic part of London during the sixteenth century was that part between Charing Cross and Westminster Abbey. Here the sovereign resided at the Royal Palace of Whitehall. York Palace, as the mansion was formerly named, was the town house of Cardinal Wolsey, and here this great Englishman lived in almost royal state. After his downfall the mansion passed into the hands of Henry VIII. Many

alterations and additions were made, and, seven years after the death of the Cardinal, the Palace of Whitehall was one of the most magnificent buildings in London. Within its walls Henry VIII died, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth, held Parliaments, and Charles I was beheaded.



Palace Yard Stairs, 1641

An old historian says that St Martin's Church, which stands near Trafalgar Square, was built by Henry VIII, because the King did not like funeral processions to pass through the grounds of Whitehall Palace on their way to Westminster Abbey. At this time St Martin's Lane was a pretty country road, leading to the village of St Giles-in-the-Fields.

CHAPTER VII

STUART LONDON

THE history of London during the seventeenth century is concerned mainly with Civil War, plague, fire and bad government. Our city was already established as by far the largest town in the country, and, notwithstanding the severe drawbacks which it experienced during these disastrous times, it still kept its prominent position. Its population and wealth were greater than that of any other capital in Europe.



A Lady Mayoress of London (after Hollar)

During the Civil War between Charles I and the Parliamentary forces, the citizens of London were whole-hearted in support of the Parliamentarians. At first this was not altogether the case, for when the King returned to London a short time before the war broke out, he was accorded a magnificent reception by the Lord Mayor and the Common Council. This raised his hopes, and some of his most prominent enemies became his friends once more. The citizens thought that the quarrel between Charles and his Parliament had gone far enough, and, as the King had made several concessions to the will of his people, they were inclined to leave matters where they

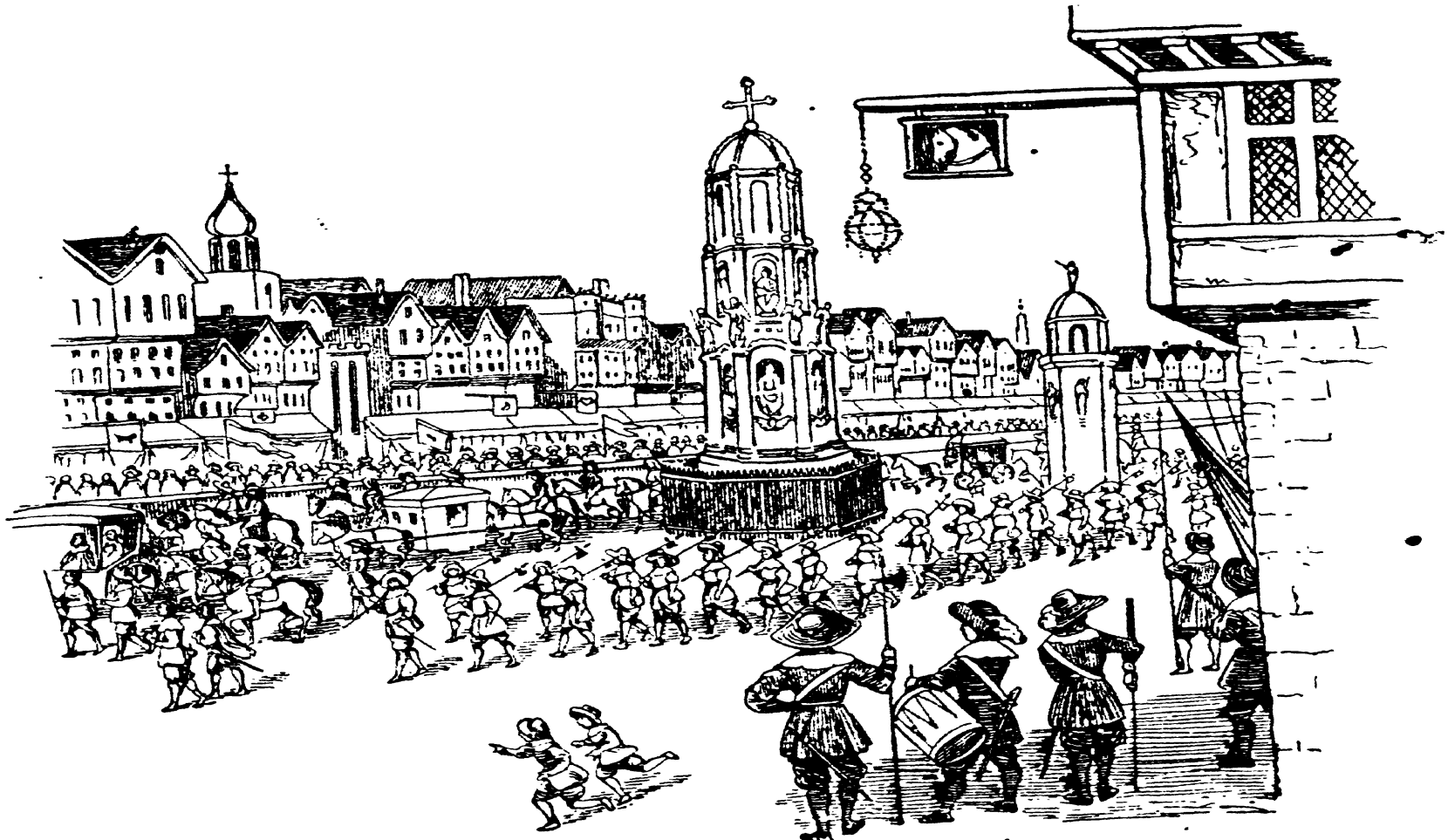
stood. But the King's foolish attempt to arrest five members of the House of Commons on a charge of high treason, together with his unwillingness to take any advice that did not agree with his own way of thinking, caused his friends again to desert him, and, during the terrible struggle, London and the Home Counties sided with Cromwell.

Life in London at this time was by no means



The Old Landing-Stage at Westminster Hall

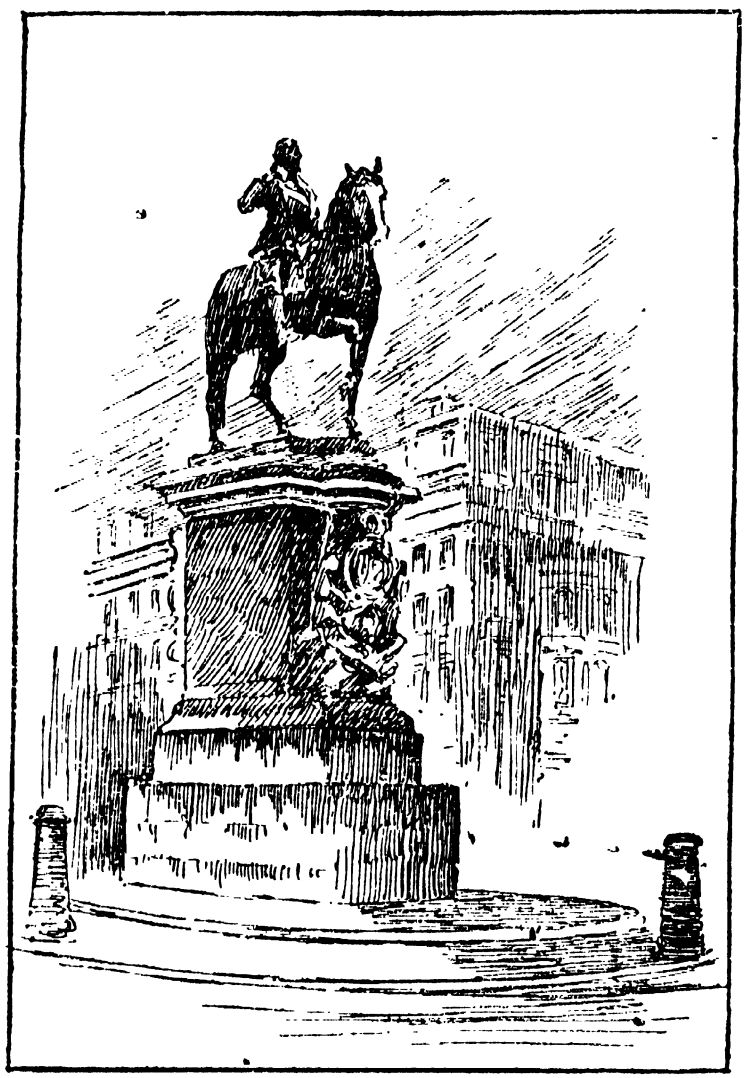
comfortable. Riots broke out daily. The Commons during the King's absence in Scotland surrounded Parliament by a guard of soldiers, which the King withdrew on his return to London. John Pym, known by his friends as "King Pym," was the foremost leader of the rioters, and he was also one of the five members whom Charles tried to arrest. We are told that the train-bands of the City and the watermen of London brought back to Parliament the five members from



Cheapside in Stuart Times. A Procession

Grocer's Hall—where they had taken refuge—a few days after the attempted arrest, amidst the cheering of enormous crowds. The King saw that London was now strongly against him, and he fled from the city, never to return again until he was brought as a prisoner.

In January 1649 London took part in one of the



Charles I Statue, Trafalgar Square

most tragic events of English history, for on the 20th of January the trial of the King commenced in Westminster Hall. You have no doubt read of this trial in your history books. About a week after the King's

sentence to death, his execution took place at Whitehall. The streets in the vicinity were black with spectators, and sight-seers crowded every available roof which overlooked the scaffold. We are told that a deep groan of pity broke from the silent and awe-stricken crowd when the executioner lifted up the King's head with the remark: "This is the head of a traitor!"



Lady of 1643 (Hollar)

Quite a different scene was witnessed in our city when Charles II returned from his exile in France. The citizens of London, in common with most of the country people, were anxious for the restoration of the monarchy, and when Charles, by the Declaration of Breda, promised many valuable reforms, the Government offered him the crown. We are told that his entry into London was one continuous triumph, and nearly all the citizens, with the exception of the army, looked with favour on their new sovereign. The scene is described as follows:—



London Bellman

"The streets were strewed with flowers; bells were ringing; fountains ran with wine; tapestries hung from every house on the route of the procession; the mayor, aldermen, and all the companies were in their liveries, chains of gold, and banners; lords and

nobles were clad in cloth of silver, gold, or velvet; windows and balconies all set with ladies; trumpets, music, and myriads of people flocking, even so far as from Rochester"; and the eye-witness continues: "I stood in the Strand and beheld it, and blessed God; and all this was done without one drop of blood shed."



Costume of the Middle Class

Shortly after these events a procession of quite a different nature took place. The King took a mean revenge upon the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw, who had been buried in Westminster Abbey. They were dragged from their tombs through the streets of London, and hung in chains on the gallows at Tyburn Gate, which stood at the west end of Oxford Street, and where public executions long took place. They remained on the gallows for a whole day, and thousands of Londoners passed before them. Afterwards they were buried at the foot of the gallows among the bodies of murderers.

A great change took place in the morals and manners of London's citizens after the Restoration. For a period of about fifty years London was given over to vice of every description, and this is probably one of the darkest periods of our city's history. All kinds of

sports, such as May-Day revels and morris dancing, Christmas festivities, and many quite innocent enjoyments, had been sternly repressed by the Puritans during the Commonwealth. Now a great reaction set in. Charles himself had the reputation of being a merry monarch. A week before he died we are told that he was sitting in a splendid chamber at Whitehall, surrounded by his courtiers, gambling, and full of gaiety and pleasure. Where the King leads others are wont to follow, and many of London's citizens drank, gambled and gave way to all manner of follies and excesses.



A Puritan Gentleman

A good description of London during the Stuart period is given us by a famous historian when he says: "London was in fact a wholly different place from the rest of England. Scarcely lighted at all, ill-paved, swarming at night with riotous young men of birth, who rendered traffic in the dark dangerous, it was yet the abode of the chief wealth, and the chief culture of the nation. That culture was by no means wholly good. The reaction from the Puritan times, the pre-eminence of France, and the introduction of French manners, in all their wickedness, had produced a state of vice among the courtiers which we can now scarcely conceive. The statesmen who ruled England did not think it beneath them to be guilty of such scandals that the very people of London were with difficulty restrained from taking the law into their own hands to punish them."

In 1716 an Act was passed compelling every house-

holder to hang out a light before his door from six o'clock to eleven o'clock in the evening, and it was not until the year 1807 that gas-lighting took place.



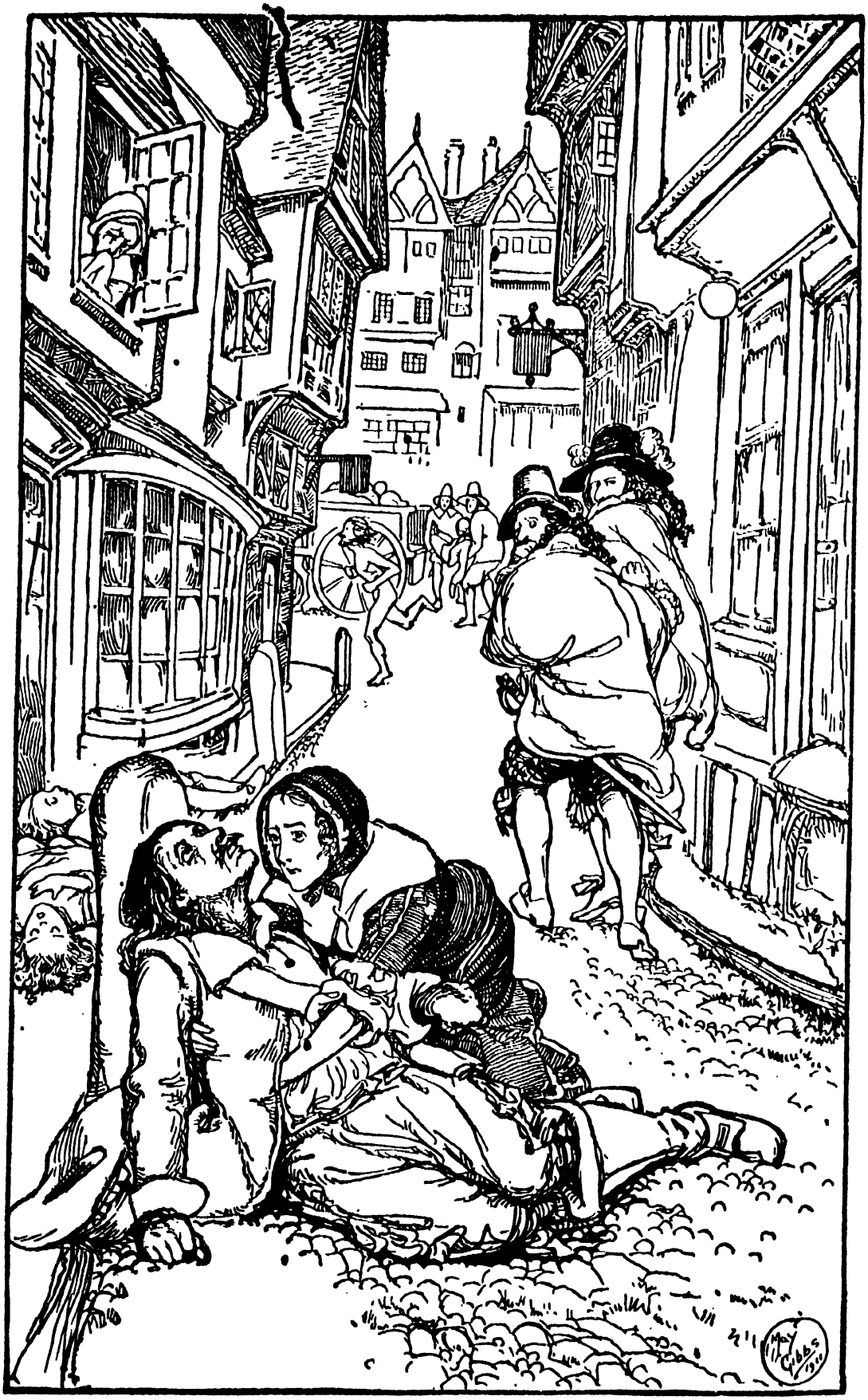
Watchmen in Stuart Times (Dekker)

The years from 1664-1666 were a period of great mourning, for in the summer of 1665 the Great Plague broke out. London had been previously visited with plague, under the names of The Death, and The Black Death, but the Great Plague was the most dreadful of them all. Nowadays, when we have our improved methods of sanitation, removal of rubbish and sewage, isolation hospitals, and so on, we are not surprised that plague and fever were continually appearing in the narrow, ill-ventilated streets and alleys of Mediæval and Stuart London.



Gentlemen at the time James II

Those of you who wish to obtain a good account of the Plague should read Defoe's book—*The Journal of the Plague Year.* It is said that the terrible disease came to us from Holland, where, in Amsterdam, 20,000 people had died of it during the previous year. Its progress was remarkably rapid. The winter and spring



Street Scene during the Plague

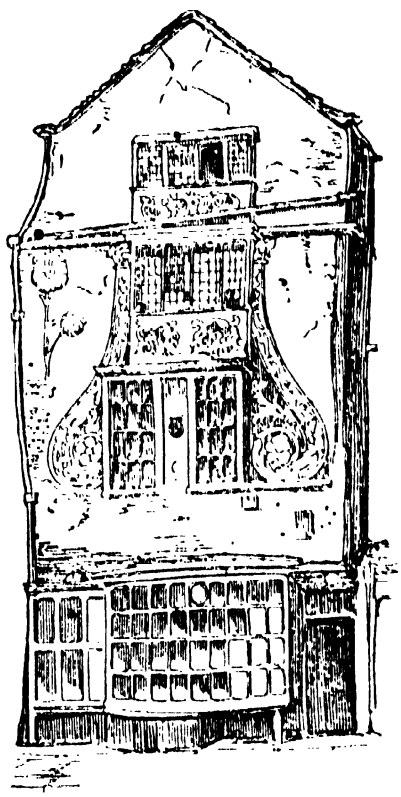
of 1665 had been extremely dry, and the summer very hot, so that the drains had not been properly flushed by rain, and they were in a very foul state. Many of the courtiers, together with the King, fled to the country on the first approach of the Plague, and the poorer people were left to look after themselves. It is said that 10,000 people died in one week, and altogether 100,000 persons are believed to have perished. Grass grew in the silent streets, and rows of houses stood empty. The poet Dryden describes this as follows:—

"*Within the walls,*
The most frequented once and noisy parts
Of town, now midnight silence reigns, e'en there
A midnight silence at the noon of day!
And grass, untrodden, springs beneath the feet."

During the year following the Plague, another terrible disaster befell London. This was the Great Fire, which broke out in a baker's shop near the Thames on 2nd September 1666. Unfortunately for the citizens a strong east wind blew the flames westward, and the wooden houses with their thatched roofs quickly took fire. One of the best descriptions of the Fire is given by Evelyn in his Diary: "All the sky was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, and the light was seen for forty miles around for many nights. Ten thousand houses all in one flame! The noise, and crackling, and thunder of the impetuous flames; the shrieking of women and children; the hurry of people; the fall of towers, houses and churches, was like a hideous storm, and the air all about was so hot and inflamed, that at last one was not able to approach it; so that they were forced to stand still and

let the flames burn on, which they did for near two miles in length and one in breadth." Thirteen thousand houses, eighty-nine churches, and four hundred streets were destroyed.

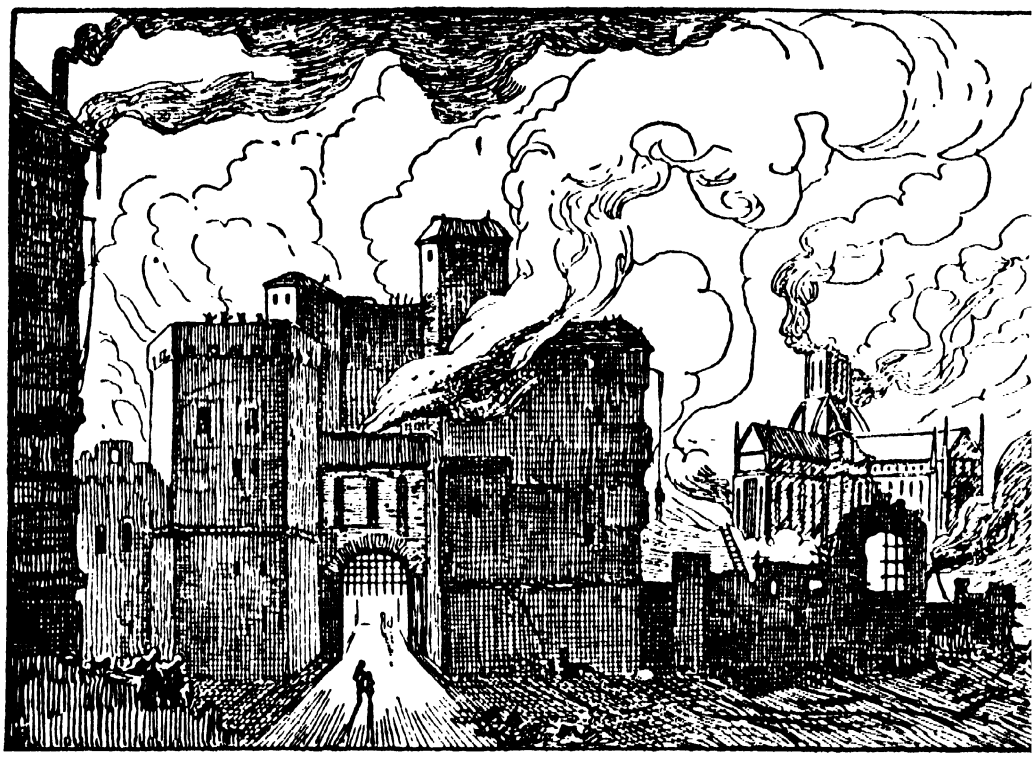
Sad though this calamity was to the people then living in London, yet it was afterwards a great blessing to our city. The close, ill-ventilated streets and houses of old London were replaced by others far more healthy and commodious. The remains of the Plague were utterly destroyed, and London was afterwards one of the healthiest places in the kingdom. An Act of Parliament was at once passed for the rebuilding of the city. Sir Christopher Wren, a great architect, was entrusted with the task of planning it, and if he had been given a free hand London would have been one of the most beautiful capitals in Europe. All the streets would have been broad and wide, and there would have been no narrow, congested thoroughfares, such as Fleet Street is nowadays. Wren rebuilt fifty-three of the parish churches, as well as St Paul's Cathedral.



Old Timber House (Type of Building before the Fire)

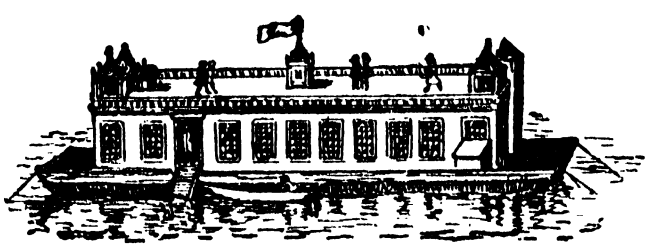
In the seventeenth century the City was not entirely filled with offices, shops, and other places of business, as it is to-day. Most of the rich merchants had stately mansions in the City with spacious lawns and gardens attached to them, while their poorer brethren lived over the shops. Nearly every shopkeeper or any other

tradesman had an apprentice, whom he agreed to clothe, lodge and board for a number of years, while the trade was learnt. You may have read stories of these



Burning of Newgate and Old St Paul's

apprentices. They seem to have been very fond of playing practical jokes on their masters, and at night, when the day's work was done, they frequently marched along Chepe, and down the Strand, singing songs.



Coffee-house on the Thames

A great feature of social life during Stuart times was the *coffee-house*. It is said that "the coffee-house was the Londoner's home," and it took the place of the modern club. In books of "Old London" we read of such famous



Coffee-house

men as Sir Isaac Newton, Dr Johnson, Addison, and Goldsmith frequenting the coffee-houses, and talking politics and general gossip. In the year 1675 these houses were suddenly ordered by the Government to be shut up, because of the too seditious language which was used in them. This action greatly aroused the wrath of most of London's leading citizens, and after a short time they were reopened.

If we could have walked down London's principal streets about two hundred years ago, we should have



Gentlefolk of the Period

noticed many curious signs hanging from the houses. Instead of numbers we should have seen such signs as *The Three Sugar-loaves*, *The Green Man*, *The Jolly Butchers*, and so on. It was not until the year 1767 that houses were first numbered. No doubt the custom of using signs was necessary when people could not read.

Toward the end of the Stuart period, in 1703, a fearful storm broke over London. It lasted four days, and the damage done was estimated at £2,000,000. Houses, churches and large public buildings were unroofed; ships in the river were driven ashore; and there was loss of life through accidents caused by falling wreckage.

CHAPTER VIII

MODERN LONDON

FOR the purposes of our city's history we are speaking of *modern* London as beginning with the reign of George I, in 1714.

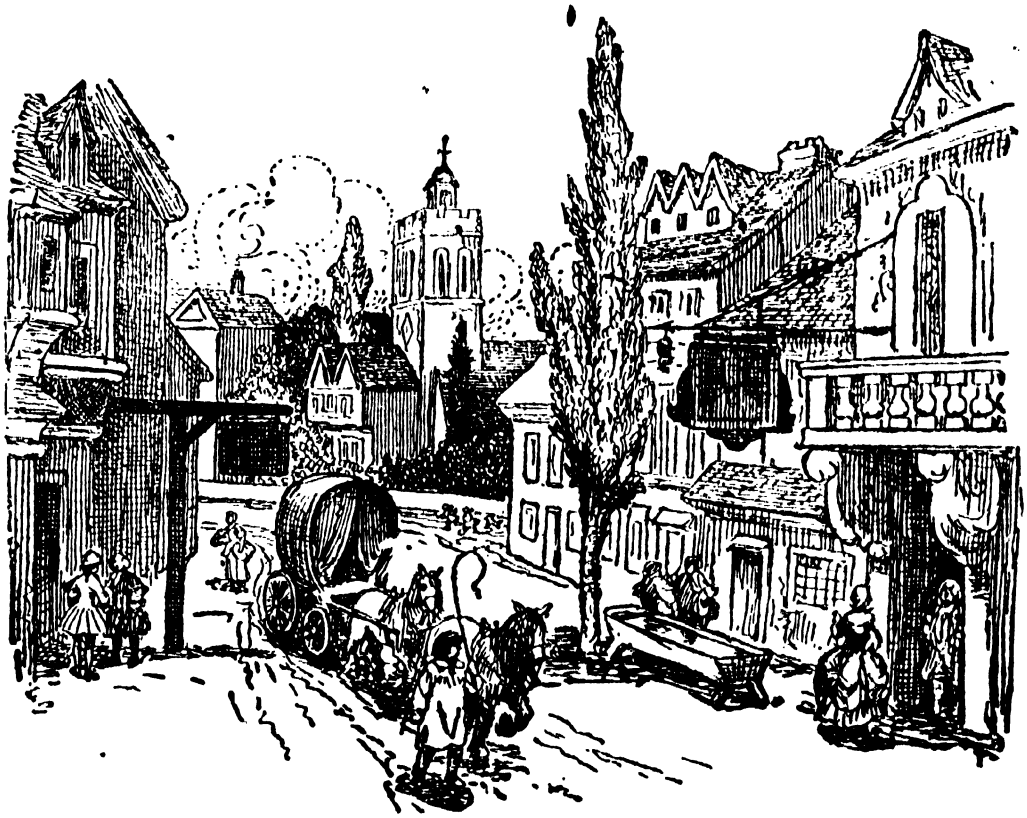
Probably London, in common with most large cities, has made more rapid progress during the last two centuries than at any period of its history. In 1700 the population was considerably less than a million; now greater London has over seven million inhabitants.

There are many reasons why our city has grown at such an enormous rate, but perhaps the greatest of them is the improved means of communication. Lord Macaulay tells us that in the seventeenth century the inhabitants of London were, for almost every practical purpose, farther from Reading than they are now from Edinburgh, and farther from Edinburgh than they now are from Vienna. In that time the principal means of travelling was by stage-coach. It took four or five days to travel to York; two days to Reading; four to Bristol; and three to Oxford. Nowadays one can board the Scotch express at Euston Station and arrive at Edinburgh in eight hours.

During the last few years a network of Tube railways has been bored underground in all directions, so that the means of travelling between various points of the vast city have been greatly improved. Motor buses

have taken the place of the much slower-moving horse-buses, and the swift "taxis" have displaced the hansom cabs.

Another great improvement in the lighting of London's streets was the use of gas. Hitherto only oil-lamps had been in use, but gas-lighting became

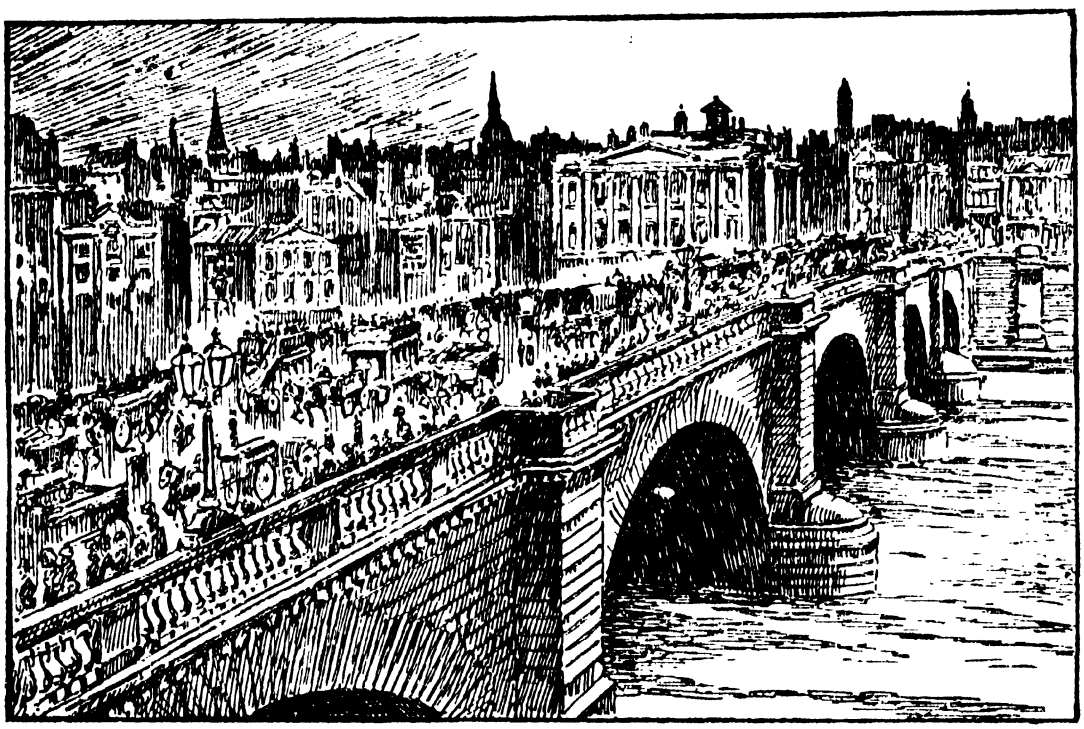


Islington, 1760

general about a hundred years ago. Dr Johnson is said to have been the first great man to predict that London's streets would one day be "lighted by smoke," but Sir Walter Scott, and even men of science, such as Sir Humphry Davy, laughed at the idea, and declared it quite impossible. Gas-lighting did much to put down the crime and coarse manners of the seventeenth century. Thieves, robbers and bullies had fewer dark corners in which to hide from the police and watchmen,

and it was said that "gas was the greatest police officer in existence."

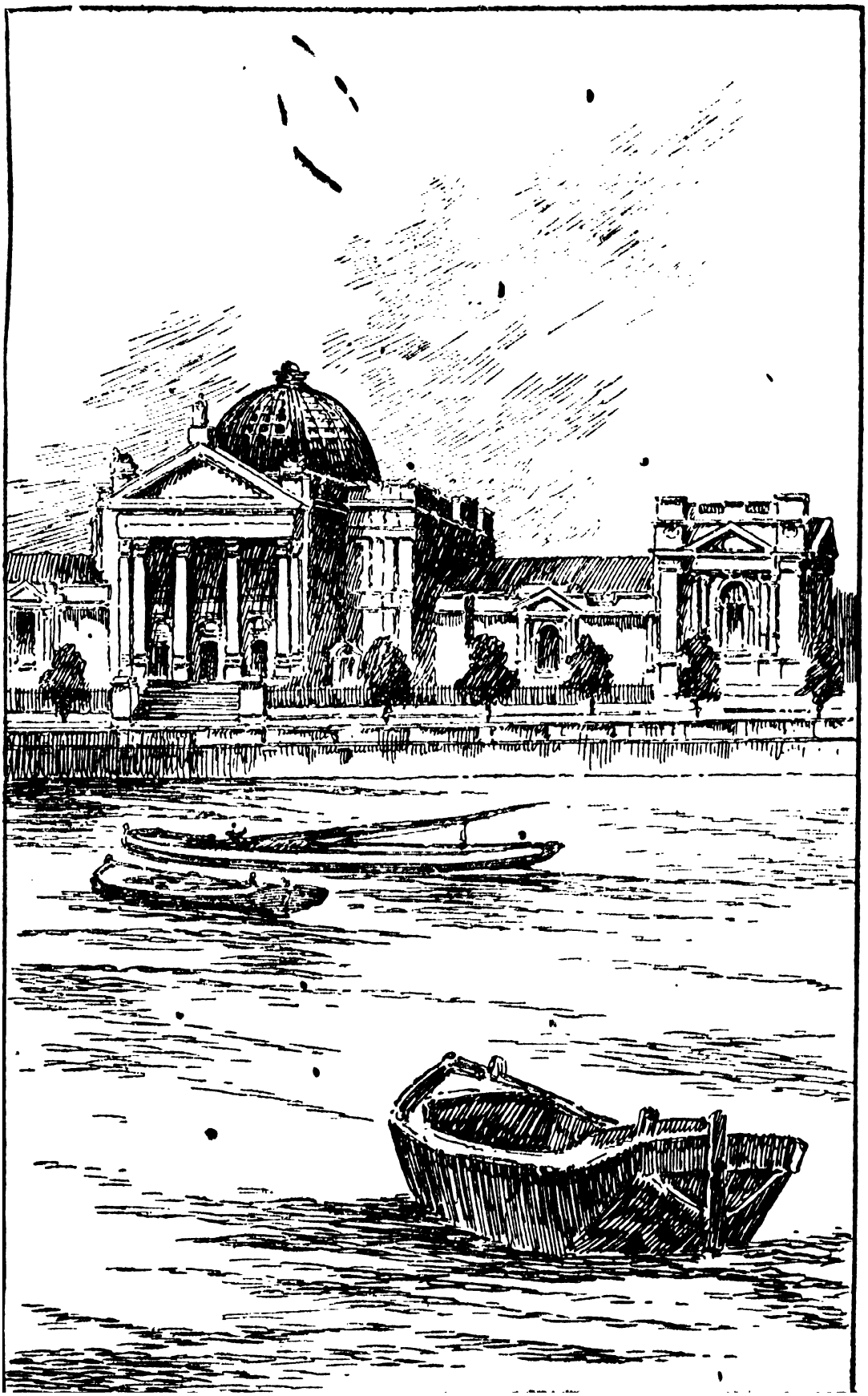
Up to the accession of George II the Thames was spanned by only one bridge—London Bridge—but during this King's reign Blackfriars and Westminster Bridge were added. Waterloo Bridge was built two years after the battle of Waterloo, Southwark Bridge



London Bridge

followed two years later, and in 1831 the new London Bridge was opened for traffic. During the last century the fine Thames Embankment has been made, and this is one of the most magnificent thoroughfares in London.

The enormous and rapid development of electricity provides an important chapter in the history of our city. Electric lighting has rapidly extended, and has taken the place of gas in most of our principal streets. The electric railway and electric tramway have been two of the main causes of the extension of the suburbs,



The Tate Gallery, Millbank

for business people are enabled to reach their city offices from considerable distances in a short time.



A London Postman of 1838

A great writer has described the remarkable growth of London during the last two centuries in these words: "At the beginning of the nineteenth century London may be described as the capital of England; when railways became general, it became the capital of Great Britain; when rapid steam vessels connected its port with all our colonies, it became the capital of the British Empire; and, now that it has a large and growing trade with every port of any size upon the face of the globe, it may fairly be called the capital of the Commercial World."

CHAPTER IX

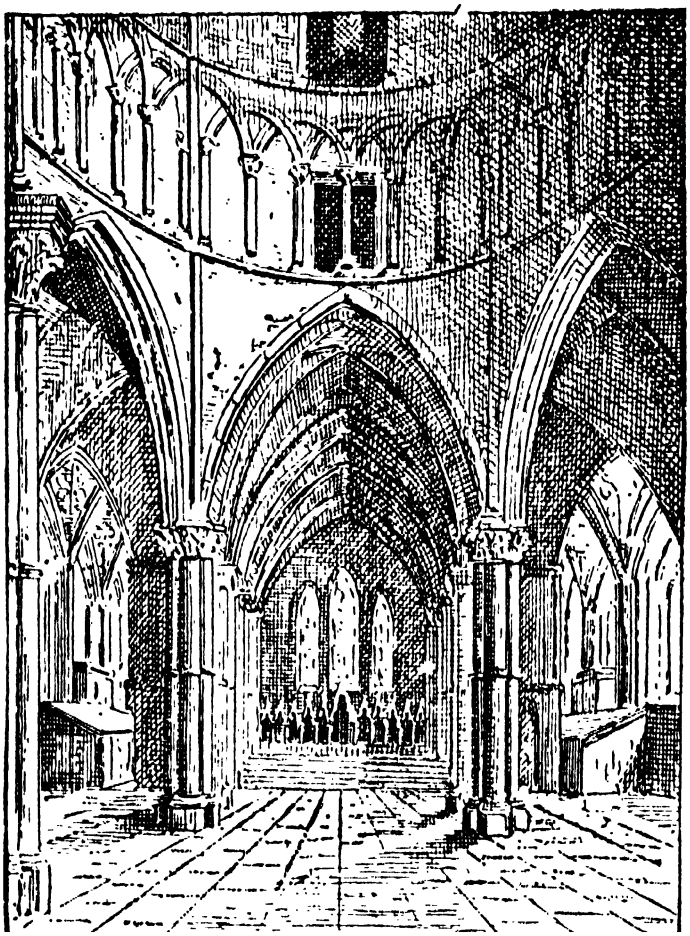
STREETS AND DISTRICTS COMMEMORATING RELIGIOUS ORDERS

IN our times we are allowed full liberty with regard to religion, but in olden times it was very different. You would be greatly surprised if a policeman called on your parents and served a summons on them to appear before the magistrates to answer a charge of not attending church, but such a course was by no means improbable a few centuries ago.

You have read of the Roman missionaries who introduced Christianity into this country, and no doubt you have heard of the pious Columba, the holy Aidan, and Cædmon, the sweet singer. At first the monks lived on islands around the coast, but one of the first towns in which they settled was Canterbury. From here they came to London, and we have many traces of their various orders in names of streets and buildings.

One of the most historical sites in London is the Temple, which stands between Fleet Street and the Thames Embankment, between the old cities of London and Westminster. On this spot a great monastery was built in the twelfth century for the Knights Templars or Red Cross Knights. The Templars were a religious order founded to protect the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and also to guard the pilgrims who travelled to the Holy Sepulchre. It is said that their name was

derived from the description originally given of them as "poor soldiers of the Temple of Solomon." At first they were very poor, but in time they amassed great wealth. In 1313 their property was annexed by the Crown. It is said that Edward I went to the Temple with some armed followers, and, calling for the treasurer, pretended that he wanted to see his mother's jewels, which were there for safe keeping. Once in the treasure-house, he deliberately broke open the coffers of the Templars, and carried away ten thousand pounds to Windsor Castle. The Temple Church still remains of the old buildings. Here may be seen the Penitential Cell, where the monks suffered penance for their misdeeds, and where some of them were starved to death. Here, too, in the Inner Temple the great poet Oliver Goldsmith was buried. The grave lies in the open pathway, and the kitchen windows of a Fleet Street restaurant overlook it. The simple inscription is: "Here lies Oliver Goldsmith." In Temple Gardens,



Circular Apse, Temple Church

adjoining the church, it is said that the white and red roses were plucked as badges for the Yorkists and Lancastrians in the disastrous Wars of the Roses. For a good description of this scene you should read Shakespeare's *Henry VI*, Part I, Act II, scene 4.

Austin Friars, which stands near the Royal Ex-



Dutch Church—Austin Friars

change, formerly contained the Priory of the Austin, or Augustine, Friars. These famous monks followed rules made by the great Augustine, who was the first missionary sent by Pope Gregory to England in the sixth century. They were originally hermits, and

went about barefooted, clad in long black robes. There were nearly two hundred religious houses for these monks in this country, but that built on the site of the modern district known as Austin Friars, was the largest and most important.

The Minories, leading from Houndsditch to Tower Hill, reminds us of the Minoresses or nuns of St Clare. The Church of Holy Trinity, standing quite near, once belonged to this order, which was founded in 1212 by the Lady of St Claire, who was an Italian.

But let us turn back to St Paul's Cathedral and make our way to Paternoster Row, now one of the centres of book-publishing. Do you not think it very appropriate that the places where these monks and nuns once lived should be occupied by the offices of the publishers and the shops of the booksellers, for the monks were the pioneers of learning? Could we have walked along the narrow Paternoster Row in olden times we should have seen black-robed monks busily engaged in the sale of *pater nosters*, or rosaries. These rosaries were long strings of beads worn by the monks, and used in certain religious observances.

At the west end of Paternoster Row is Amen Corner. We are told by some historians that the monks began to repeat prayers and count their beads at the top of the Row, and when they reached the bottom they had come to the last of the beads, where they always concluded with "Amen."

Leading to Amen Corner is Ave Maria Lane. *Ave Maria* are Latin words meaning a prayer, or *ave*, to the Virgin Mary.

Creed Lane, lying off Ludgate Hill, and Godliman Street, do not need much careful thought in order to

discover their origin, and the same may be said of Pilgrim Street on the other side of the Hill.

Leading out of Fleet Street we come to Whitefriars. This district was the centre of the White Friars or Carmelites. These monks belonged to the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and the first members of the order spent their lives as hermits on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land. Their dress is of a dark brown colour, over which they wear a white cloak when out walking. They did much good to the poorer people of the city in the Middle Ages. There were no strict "Laws of Health" as there are to-day. Loathsome leprosy existed in most of the "slums," and plague was continually breaking out. The doctors of that time were very unskilled. Indeed, in many cases, the monks were the only doctors, and right well did they tend the sick and help the weak. Perhaps you have an idea that the monks preached in their churches on Sundays, as ministers do nowadays; and then shut themselves up in the monasteries for the rest of the week. This was by no means the case. Had we lived in London about six hundred years ago, we could have seen the Carmelites setting out from Whitefriars Street at all times of the day, and night, with their medical appliances and drugs, into the very meanest of streets along by the Fleet, and risking their lives by going among people suffering from such dreadful infectious diseases as small-pox, scarlet fever, and leprosy.

And not only did the Carmelites do this, but they were teachers as well. The people then were most ignorant. There were no schools, and only the very wealthy could afford teachers. If grown-up people were able to read and write as well as a boy

of ten nowadays, they were considered very good scholars.

Whitefriars was one of the most famous of the London sanctuaries. Here criminals were safe from legal penalties so long as they kept sanctuary. Sir Walter Scott gives a description of Alsatia, as Whitefriars was originally called, in his *Fortunes of Nigel.*

We cannot leave the Friars of London without noticing the name of Blackfriars. The Black Friars or Dominicans were so called because they wore long black mantles over their white robes. When the monasteries were dissolved in the reign of Henry VIII, there were fifty-eight houses belonging to this order in England, and one of the most important was that in London. Blackfriars Bridge, named after these monks, is one of the finest bridges over the Thames, and from it a good view of St Paul's Cathedral, together with most of Wren's fifty churches, can be obtained.

It is hard to realize when walking along the congested districts which we have described, amid the roar of traffic, and pedestrians crowding the pavement, that there were once peaceful cloisters on these same sites, where the monks could pass to and fro in meditation. It is equally hard to imagine, now that we have our fine hospitals, that these little bands of men and women alone fought against famine and disease, amid sordid surroundings far worse than most of those in which modern doctors have to work. Indeed, the memory of the early monks is a memory of which London may well be proud.

CHAPTER X

HOW STREET NAMES TEACH US HISTORY

HAVE you ever thought that a great deal of the history of a town can be learned from a careful study of the names of the streets? If boys and girls are to make their way in the world they must always be on the watch for information. The boy who has learned to think, and therefore to reason, often asks himself such questions as these: Why is this street called after that man? In what way was that great man's history connected with this town, so that the inhabitants should honour him by calling one of their principal streets after his name? If the boy be eager for information —as all wise boys are—he will not rest until he has satisfied his curiosity by obtaining the information from his parents, teachers, guide-books, or from some other source.

Quite near the place where this chapter is being written is a road called "Myddleton Road." A little boy of ten years old, who lived in this road, had been listening to a geography lesson in which his teacher had described the New River—a canal about thirty-six miles long, by which water is brought from Hertfordshire to the north of London, and which supplies many of the people of north London with drinking-water. He had heard all about Sir Hugh

Myddleton, who lived in the reign of James I, and how this rich man spent all his fortune in constructing this canal. He also learnt that he, as well as many thousands of people who live in the northern suburbs, have good cause to thank Sir Hugh for his work about three hundred years ago, and one can quite understand what was in this little boy's mind when he asked his teacher: "Please, sir, is that why my road is called 'Myddleton'?"

In this chapter we are going to find out a little of London's history by noting how some of the principal streets obtained their names. Even if you do not live in London this information may still be valuable to you, for you may learn to follow the same plan of reasoning and deduction in your own town.

Not long ago the British Science Guild—a body of gentlemen who look after the interests of all branches of science—informed the London County Council that there was no street in the whole of London which had been named after a man of science. They felt rather slighted at this, and they also pointed out that the streets of Paris abounded in names of scientific men; in fact, there was no great scientist whose name had not been honoured in this way.

In his reply to the Guild the Clerk of the Council did not attempt to deny the assertion, but he gave a list of several streets which had been named after noted men in history, etc. The chief of them were Regent Street, Oxford Street, Lombard Street, and Bishopsgate Street.

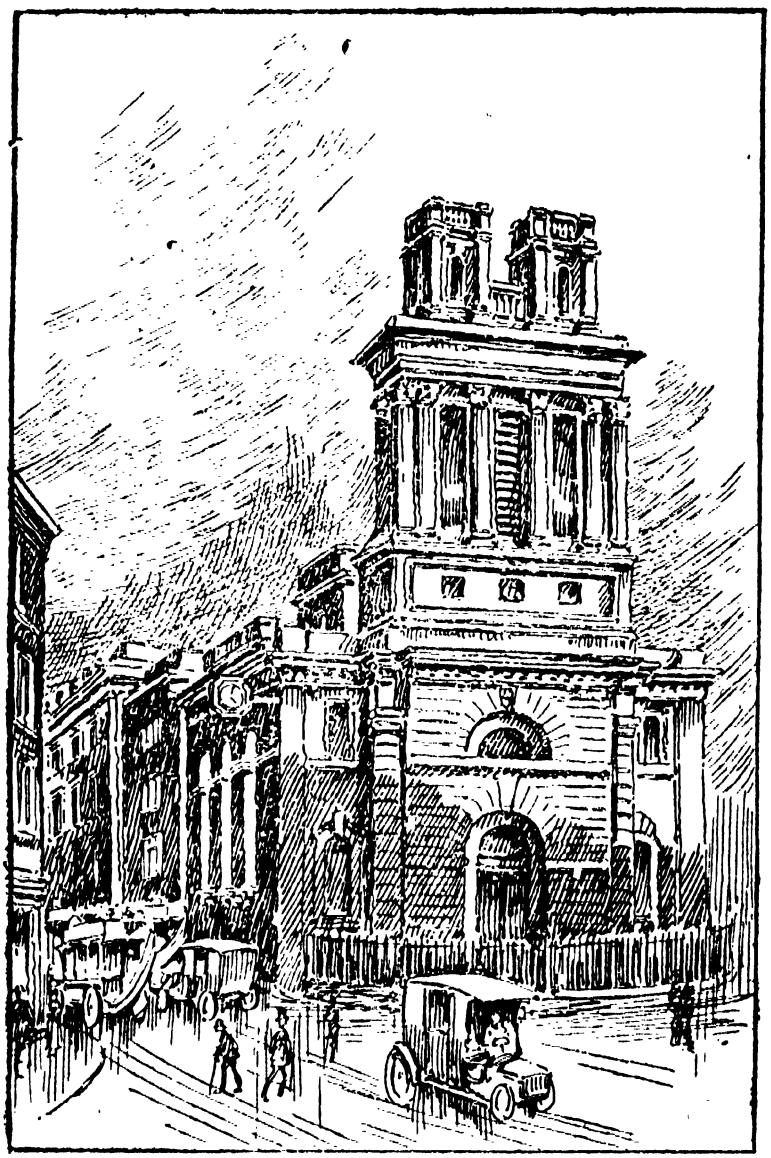
Regent Street, one of the most important streets in the West End of London, was so named by the man who designed it—John Nash—in honour of his royal friend, the Prince Regent. You may remember that

STREET NAMES



Regent Street

George III had been insane during one or two periods of his reign, and that in 1810, ten years before the King's death, his eldest son, George, Prince of Wales, had been appointed Prince Regent by Parliament. The young Regent was a great patron of Nash, and the



Lombard Street

architect decided to honour the Prince by naming London's finest street after him.

Oxford Street, another very busy and important

thoroughfare, is called after the Earl of Oxford, who owned the land on which the street was made.

We can never think of Lombard Street without calling to mind the Lombardy Jews who came to this country in 1229. You may remember that Henry III imposed heavy taxes on the people, which many of them were quite unable to pay. As there were very heavy penalties inflicted on those who did not pay, the poorer people had to borrow the money from money-lenders. The Pope, hearing of this, sent a colony of rich Jews from Lombardy, a province in the north of Italy, to advance money to those who needed it, and these merchants settled down in the part of London which has ever since been called Lombard Street. These Lombard Jews were much liked by business people, as they were honest in their dealings, and they succeeded in driving away their dishonest brothers who had for many years robbed the English in Old Jewry.

There is a small tablet on a house at the corner of Camomile Street which points out where the gate of Bishop Erkenwald, son of Offa the Saxon king, once stood; whence the name "Bishopsgate." Bishopsgate Street is divided into two parts: Bishopsgate Street Without, and Bishopsgate Street Within, according as to whether it stood outside or inside the city walls.

Ludgate Hill, on the top of which stands St Paul's Cathedral, reminds us of one of the old city gates which stood here, and which is said to have been built by King Lud, a British monarch who lived as far back as 66 B.C.—that is, before the Romans visited this country. If this be the case, we can imagine the battles which took place around this gate between the

fierce Britons and their Roman conquerors. Ludgate Circus, between Ludgate Hill and Fleet Street, is one of the busiest places in London, and it is hard to realize that it is the ground on which the wild barbarians of former times engaged in mortal combat.

Other gates which take our minds far back to the old fortifications of the city are Moorgate, Aldgate, and Newgate. All the gates have long since been removed to make way for the crowded traffic. Ludgate was removed by a carpenter in 1760, who bought it for £148. Temple Bar, built in 1670, which stood between Fleet Street and the Strand, may now be seen in Theobald's Park, near Waltham Cross.

You have already read of London's historical connexion with London Wall. Not far from this place is the busy thoroughfare of Cheapside. Probably some boys and girls may think that this street is so named because the things sold in it are *cheap*. This is not so. The Latin word for market is *chepe*, and in former times this was the great marketing-place of London. You may imagine the countrymen driving in to the *chepe* on market days, much as they now do in the country towns. Even now Cheapside is a fine shopping centre. Formerly this street was the centre of the jewellery trade, and nearly all the rich goldsmiths of London had their shops in it.

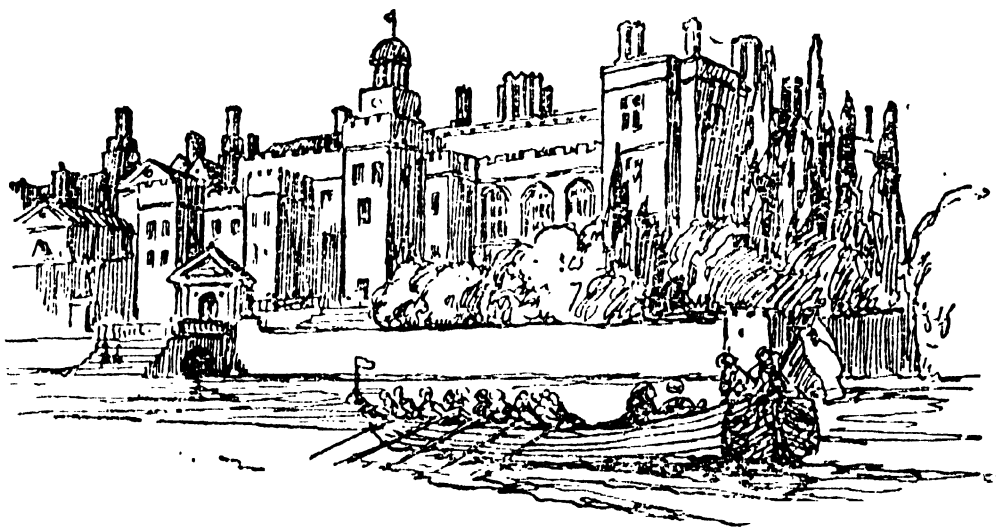
Other names which remind us of the markets of long ago are the Haymarket, near Trafalgar Square; Cornhill and Leadenhall. The haymarket was taken away from the former place less than one hundred years ago. As you walk along the street now and glance at its two imposing theatres—the "Haymarket" and "His Majesty's"—you can scarcely realize that



Guy Fawkes Day: Old Temple Bar
(From Hogarth)

here the old country farmers haggled over their deals in hay amid the litter which such a market must produce.

Holborn and Fleet Street recall to us the rapid little stream which once flowed along from Camden Town to the Thames. In its upper course the river ran through a deep hollow—the "Hollow Bourne," of the stream—and from which we obtain our modern word "Holbern." In former times the Fleet river was navigable for small boats as far as Camden Town. A famous prison for debtors—the Fleet prison—once



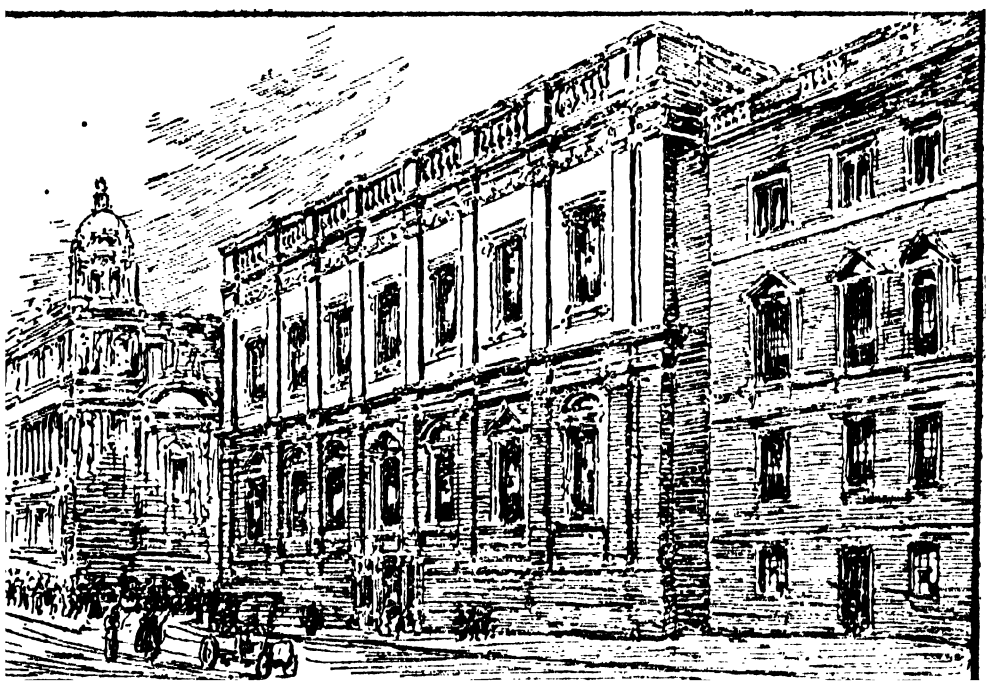
Old Somerset House, built 1548

stood on the east side of Farringdon Street, but it was pulled down in 1846. Could we have walked by the prison two centuries ago we might have seen some of the prisoners seated at grated windows with jars on their knees clamouring for alms from the passers-by.

Fetter Lane, not far from Fleet Street, derives its name from the beggars who were allowed to ask alms along it. These beggars were formerly called "faitours," and thus this road was the "faitours' lane."

STREET NAMES

It would not take a very intelligent boy to associate the Strand with the *strand* of the Thames, for you know that this busy street runs side by side with the Thames Embankment. Before this handsome river-wall and promenade were made, the Strand was nearer to the margin of the river, and we can quite understand that many objects washed up by the tide would have been cast ashore, or stranded along this road. In those days there were no crowded shops and large business houses as there are to-day. Somerset House,



Whitehall
(The Scene of the Execution of Charles I)

and a few private mansions, overlooked the Thames, and this district formed a delightful promenade for those who lived in the city.

Passing along from Trafalgar Square we come to Whitehall, called after the famous Palace of Whitehall, which formerly stood here. The palace was so

named because its freshly painted exterior looked quite white when contrasted with the dirty and dingy buildings which stood opposite.

Leaving the West End and turning back to the City, we come to Smithfield, in which, for many hundred years, the only market in London for live stock was held. Smithfield stood just outside the old city walls, and was at one period the place of public executions. You may have heard of the "Fires of Smithfield" in



Old Smithfield and St Bartholomew's Church

which were burnt nearly two hundred martyrs during the reign of Queen Mary, and which, it is said, for three years were never out. "Smithfield" recalls the large *smooth field* where tournaments were held in the Middle Ages. Indeed, this smooth field seemed to be the circus-ground of London, for history tells us that sham fights took place, acrobats performed, and outdoor theatrical performances were gone through on these large meadows. The famous Bartholomew Fair, so often mentioned in our literature, was held here. It was established in the reign of

Henry I, and was held on St Bartholomew's Day, (24th August), until it was abolished about sixty years ago. Those of you who would like a good description of the fair should read Ben Jonson's play, *Bartholomew Fair.*

Probably you remember Smithfield better as the place where Wat Tyler was slain by the Lord Mayor

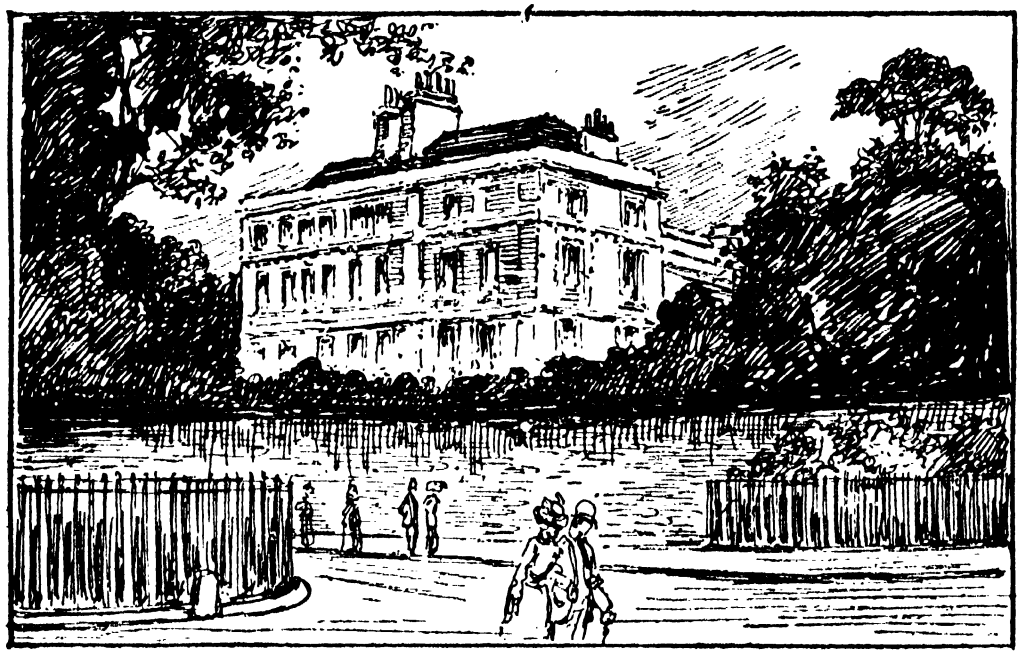


The Charterhouse, near Smithfield

in the presence of Richard II, and also as the spot where that brave Scotch patriot, William Wallace, was beheaded.

We are further reminded of the knights who took part in Smithfield Tournament, by Knightrider Street, and Giltspur Street, lying not far away. We can well imagine the armour-clad warriors sitting erect upon their horses, and looking proudly around at the throngs of people lining the roads, who made holiday when the

tournament was taking place. We can see them entering the lists; their gilt spurs flashing in the



Marlborough House—one of the Royal Residences

sunlight, and their long lances projecting far in front as they ride. It is said that tournaments frequently took place on old London Bridge, and on one famous



Pall Mall (about 1780)

occasion Richard II was present on the bridge at a trial of strength between an English and a Scottish champion.

Pall Mall, in the West End, derives its name from a French game, *paille maille*, which was played here in the reign of Charles I. This was a game with a ball and a mallet, and was somewhat similar to our modern croquet. In those days Pall Mall was a beautiful promenade leading into St James's Park. It is said that King Charles frequently took part in this French game, and the poet Waller greatly flattered the King in the following lines:—

"*Here a well-polish'd wall gives us the joy,*
To see our Prince his matchless force employ;
His manly posture and his gracefull mien,
Vigour and youth in all his actions seen.
His shape so lovely, and his limbs so strong,
Confirm our hopes we shall obey him long.
No sooner has he touched the flying ball,
But 'tis already more than half the Mall,
And such a fury from his arm hath got,
As from a smoking culverin 'twere shot.
May that ill-fate my enemies befall,
To stand before his anger as the ball."

CHAPTER XI

LONDON IN STONE

MUCH may be learnt of the history of a town or city from the inscriptions on monuments and statues in public squares, roads and parks. London has many such memorials of men who have helped to make her great.

One of the most important monuments is *The Monument* itself. How many of you have walked up its spiral stairway consisting of 345 steps? Those who have done so have obtained one of the finest views of the city which it is possible to have, unless one goes up in a balloon or aeroplane. Looking upward from the stout iron cage, which is a necessary protection for visitors at that dizzy height, you will notice the huge gilt urn out of which pour blazing flames. This is a symbol of the Great Fire of London. We realize what a terrible fire this must have been when we see the congested district all around us. The fire is said to have broken out at Pudding Lane, and to have ended at Pye Corner, and, curious to say, the height of the Monument is the same as the distance of its base from the place where the fire began.

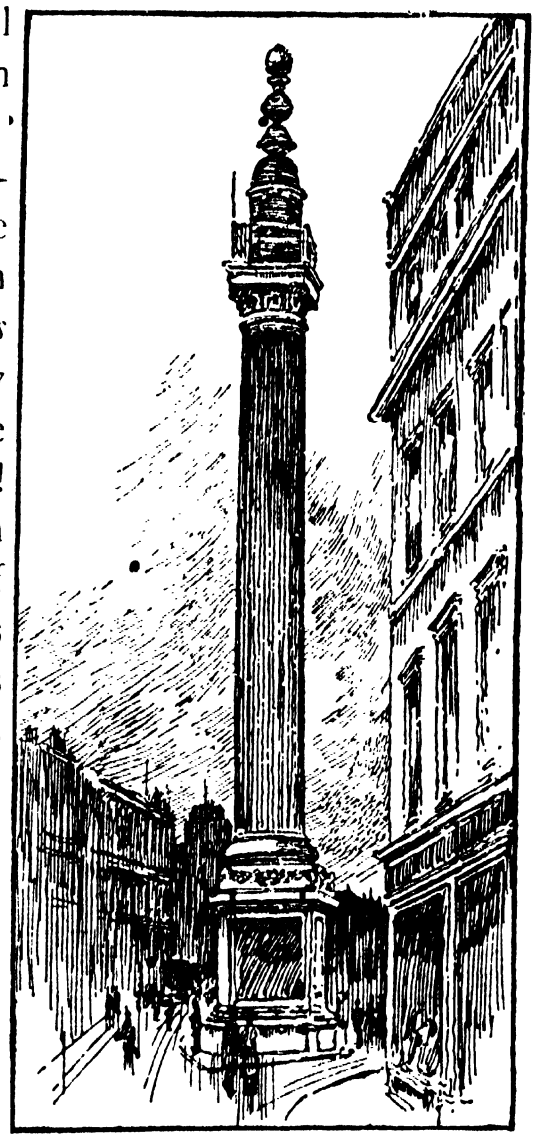
The Monument was originally built to show people that the fire was the work of Roman Catholics, who did not like Charles II. For over one hundred years an inscription on its base informed readers that this

terrible fire so began, and we can imagine the feelings of the Roman Catholics who were thus publicly slandered. They spoke of the Monument as the "Tall Bully"; and Alexander Pope, in referring to the offensive inscription, wrote:

> "*Where London's column pointing at the skies,*
> *Like a tall bully, lifts its head and lies.*"

In 1831 the City Council ordered the inscription to be erased.

On the Thames Embankment we find one of the oldest statues in the world — *Cleopatra's Needle.* What a history this stone could relate were it gifted with speech! True, we shall not learn much of the history of London from it, but it is now one of London's landmarks and so is entitled to a place in this chapter.

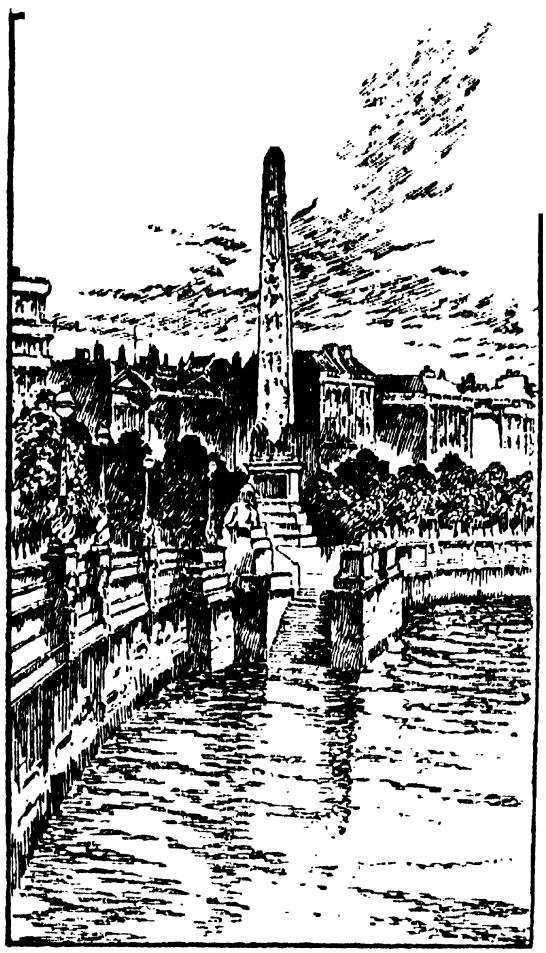


The Monument

The huge stone, or obelisk, was originally to be seen at the ancient city of On in Egypt, where it stood, with five others, at the entrance to an enormous sun temple. You may have read that the heathens of many

centuries ago worshipped the sun as the chief of their gods, and some of you may have seen the remains of a British sun temple at Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain.

In course of time two of the stones were taken away to Alexandria to adorn a beautiful temple called the Cæsarium, which had been built to the honour of the Cæsars. The greatest of these, Julius Cæsar, came into contact with the beautiful Egyptian queen, Cleopâtra, after whom our stone is named.



Cleopatra's Needle

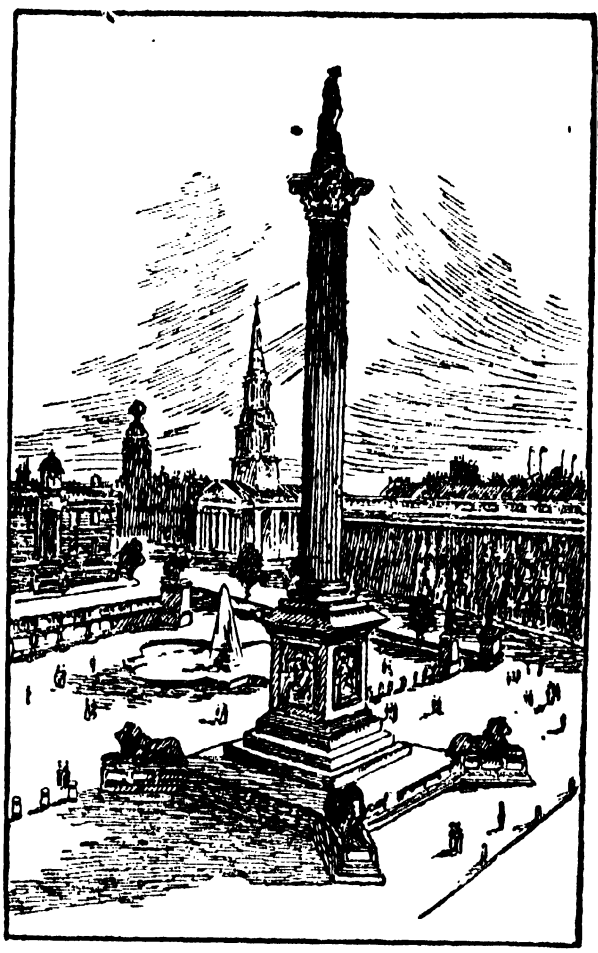
Probably the Cæsarium was the grandest temple in the world at that time. As the years passed, however, its brilliance became dimmed, and it began to be neglected, until at last it fell into decay. Many centuries passed, and the huge "Needle" fell, and lay buried in the sands. Just over a hundred years ago Sir Ralph Abercromby took Egypt from the French, and some ten years later the Khedive offered the famous stone to us as a present. The great labour and expense entailed in bringing it to this country, however, prevented the acceptance of the offer, until in 1877-1878 Sir Erasmus Wilson, who was much interested in ancient

stones and rocks, undertook to bear the cost of the removal. It was a huge and difficult task; it was not practicable to make use of cranes, and the great unwieldy stone was too heavy to be rolled on the trunks of trees to the ship, after the manner in which the ancient Britons must have rolled the stones of Stonehenge.

The ship which was to fetch the "Needle" was made on the Thames and then taken to pieces. The sections were shipped to Egypt, and the vessel was rebuilt around the "Needle" as it lay on the sand. A deep cutting was then made along the sand to the sea, and in time the ship and stone floated upon this canal. A steam-tug took the vessel in tow and, for eighteen days, all went well. Then a great storm in the Bay of Biscay compelled the sailors to set the "Needle" adrift, and the tug steamed away. Of course all imagined the stone would go to the bottom, as the ship in which it lay was not thought to be seaworthy. About four days later, however, the vessel was seen by the crew of another steamer to be tossing about on the waves, and this steamer took it in tow and brought it up the Thames. It is said to have cost Professor Wilson about £10,000 to have this stone removed and set up.

The "Needle" cannot fail to be interesting to you now that you know something of its history. Probably some of you will make a special journey to see it. As you gaze up at the tall column, standing about seventy feet in height, and covered with strange-looking marks, you must remember that you are looking at one of the oldest stones in the world. And not only is it one of the oldest stones, but one of the oldest "books" as well. Those strange symbols, looking more like rough drawings than letters, are picture-words

which give an account of the religion of the ancient Egyptians. The way to read these "pictures" was discovered quite accidentally. A party of Frenchmen, when in Egypt, dug up a stone with similar picture-words on it, but underneath there was some writing in Greek, and it seemed probable that this Greek was the key to the curious language. Thus an owl meant the letter *m*; a serpent, *f*; an eagle, *a*, and so on. You may see this very stone, called the *Rosetta Stone*, in the British Museum.



Nelson's Column, Trafalgar Square

Do you not think that London has cause to be proud of Cleopatra's needle? The other was taken to New York: with this exception we possess the oldest stone and the oldest "book" in the world.

Another of London's most imposing monuments is the Nelson Column in Trafalgar Square. As you know, this splendid square is named in memory of Lord Nelson, who is frequently called the "Saviour of England."

The column is 166 feet from the base of the pedestal to the crown of Nelson's head at the top of the statue. Every year on the eve of Trafalgar Day (21st Oct.) the

Column is decorated by the Navy League, a society devoted to the interests of the navy, and in order to affix the decorations a steeplejack ascends to the top of the tall Column. What a fine view of London he must get, to be sure, but we tremble to think of his fate, should he turn dizzy and fall.

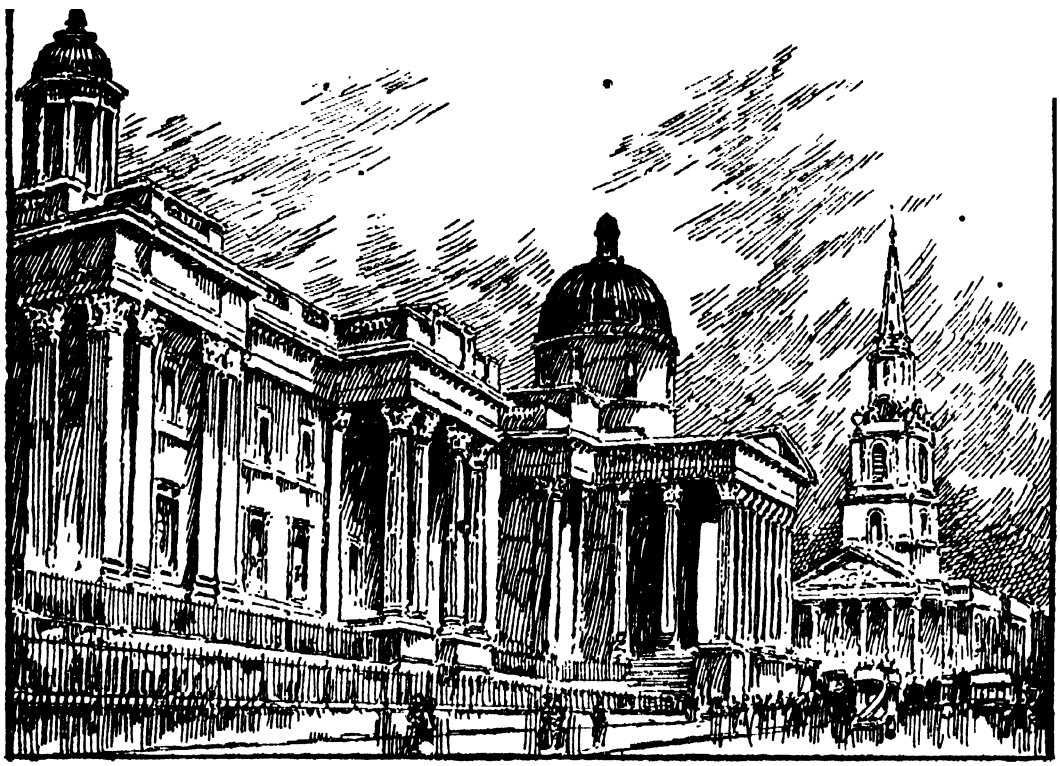
The Column was designed after a Roman pillar built in honour of Mars, the god of war. Look well at the pedestal when you are next in the Square. On one side is Nelson signing a document which is supported by a cannon. This represents the defeat of the Danes at Copenhagen in 1801. On the opposite or west side, Nelson is represented as receiving the sword of the Spanish officer, after the splendid victory at St Vincent in 1797. The north side shows us a scene from the famous battle of Aboukir fought in the following year. Here Nelson found the French fleet drawn up in Aboukir Bay under a line of forts. He attacked them late in the evening, fought all night, and destroyed nearly the whole fleet. The gallant admiral was himself wounded and was carried below. The cast shows him in the act of telling the surgeon to attend first to the needs of a common marine: "No hurry, I will take my turn with my brave men."

The scene on the south side of the pedestal depicts the death of Nelson at Trafalgar in 1805. We can also distinguish Captain Hardy; and underneath is the famous signal: "England expects every man will do his duty."

Probably you will be interested in the massive lions made of bronze which couch upon the pedestals that support the Column. These lions were made from

models by that great artist, who was himself a Londoner—Sir Edwin Landseer.

After you have closely examined the bronze reliefs on the pedestal look well around you, and you will see other interesting statues. Between the two great fountains is a statue of General Gordon, who, you may remember, was slain by the Arabs at Khartoum, in Egypt. Sir Henry Havelock is also represented. He



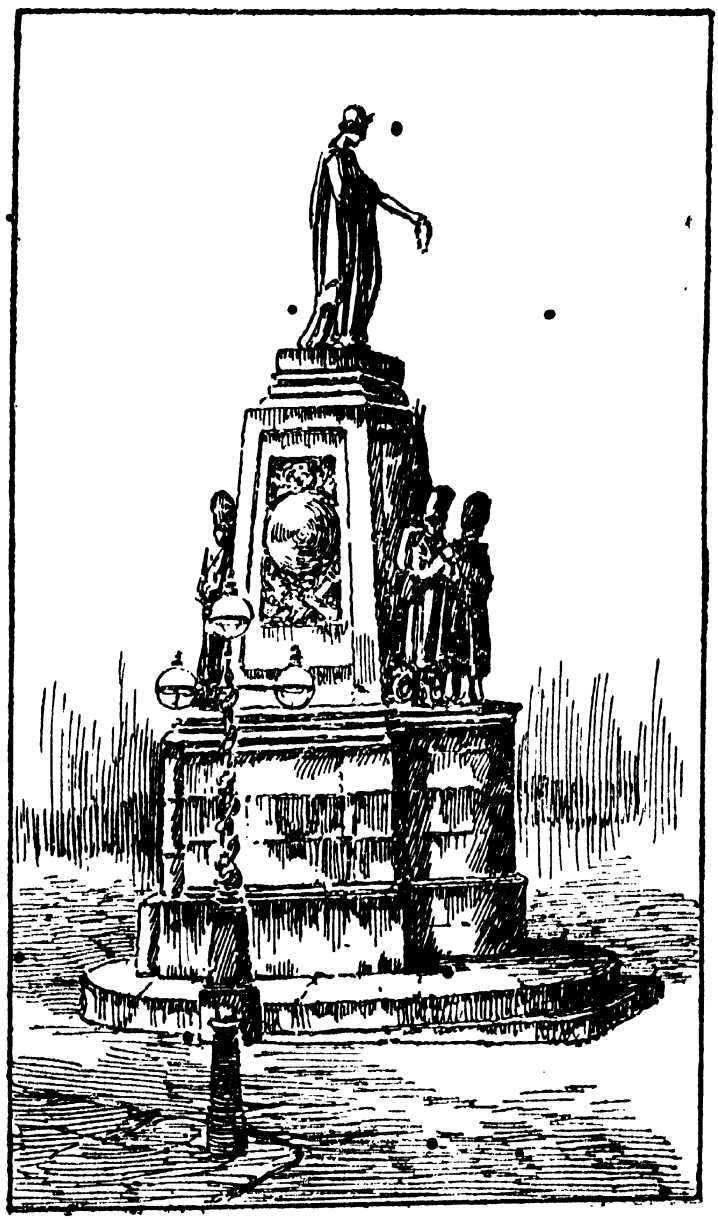
The National Gallery, Trafalgar Square

it was who marched with Sir James Outram to the relief of Lucknow, but they were just too late to save the brave Sir Henry Lawrence. Opposite to the statue of Havelock stands that to another great Indian officer, Sir Charles Napier, who broke the power of the native chiefs and conquered Sind.

It is quite probable that you have passed through or

by the Square, many times, without looking at these carvings and statues. You should read this chapter two or three times and then pay them a visit.

Not far from Trafalgar Square is Waterloo Place,



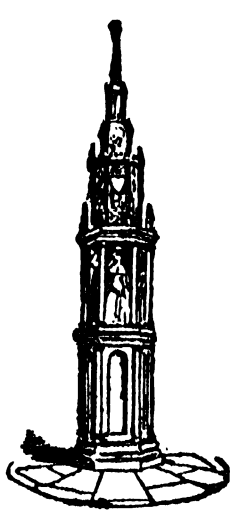
The Crimea Memorial

where, in the centre, you will see the fine Crimean monument, in memory of the officers and soldiers of the Guards, numbering over two thousand, who fell in

the terrible Crimean War. What a grand and dignified figure is Victory with her laurel wreaths! The three stalwart guardsmen, standing sentinel-like in front, appear to be taking care of the guns behind. These were captured after a terrible conflict with the Russians at Sebastapol.

The Place as a historical square is second only to that which we have already described. Five tall majestic monuments are placed around it. Lord Napier proudly sits his horse as though he were watching the gallant and successful attempts of his British soldiers to capture the Abyssinian fortress of Magdala. It seems quite appropriate that a bronze cast of Sir Colin Campbell should stand alongside Napier, for the latter was rescued by Campbell.

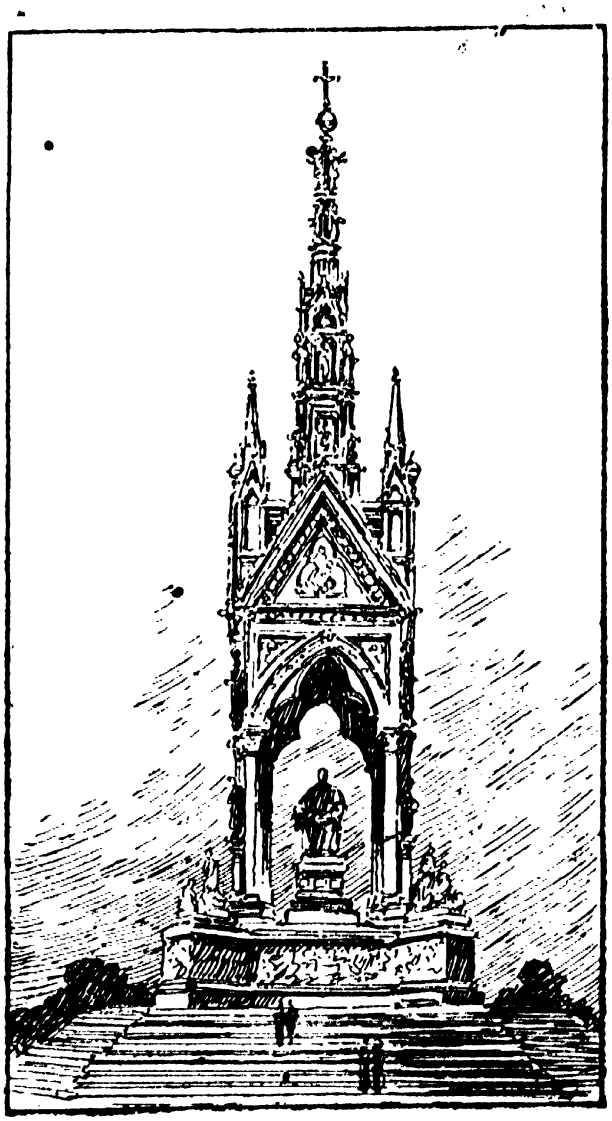
Another hero is honoured by the statue described: "To the great Arctic navigator and his brave companions who sacrificed their lives in completing the discovery of the North-West Passage." This refers to Sir John Franklin, the intrepid explorer.



ELEANOR'S CROSS CHARING X

In the yard of Charing Cross Station stands another memorial of great historical interest —Charing Cross. The present memorial is a model of that which was originally erected by Edward I in memory of his wife Eleanor of Castile, who, you remember, is said to have sucked the poison from her husband's wound, when he was fighting in the Holy Land. The Queen died in Lincolnshire, and her body was brought to Westminster Abbey for burial. Wherever the coffin rested a cross was afterwards raised to mark the King's tender love for his wife. There were originally twelve

of these memorial crosses, but now only three remain, at Waltham, Northampton, and Geddington. The last resting-place was the spot where Charing Cross now stands, but the original memorial stood at the top of Whitehall, on the site marked by the statue of Charles I. It was probably called "Charing" Cross, because the little village which stood between London and Westminster, in those early days, was named "Charing," although some historians tell us that the word "Charing" comes from the words *chère reine*—dear queen. This, however, hardly seems probable, because it is known that a village bearing this name stood there before the accession of Edward I.



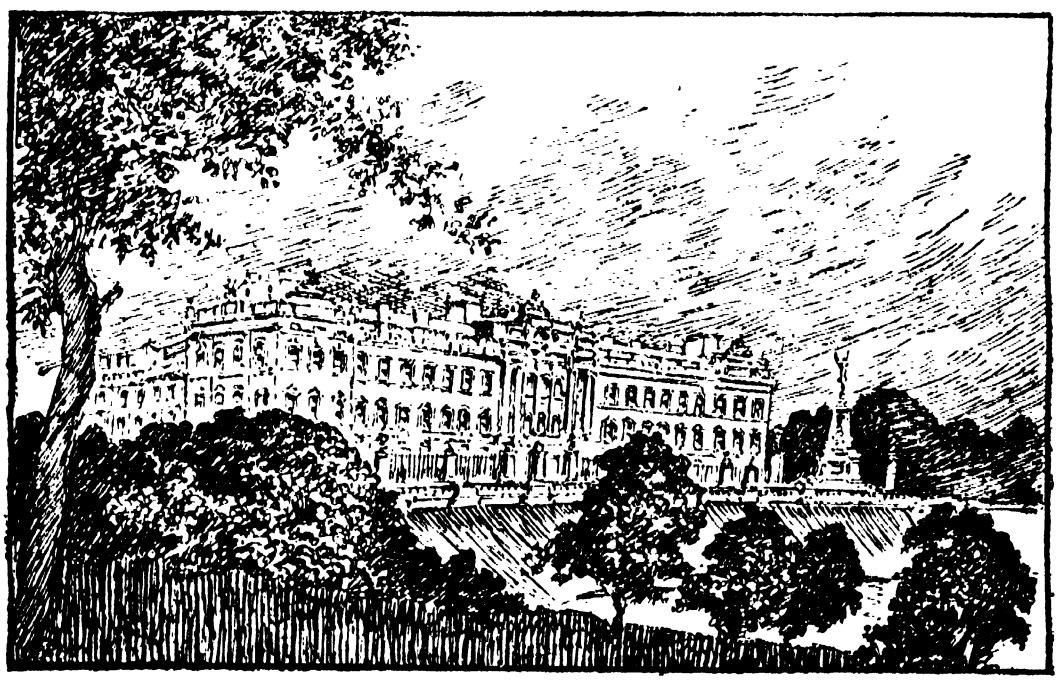
The Albert Memorial

For nearly four hundred years the Eleanor Memorial stood in this busy part of London, but in 1647 the Puritans, who took a strange delight in destroying statues and relics, had it pulled down. The

memorial was restored as faithfully to the original design as possible by the South Eastern Railway Company, at a cost of nearly £2000. If you look well at the upper part of it, you will see eight statues of Eleanor, four showing her as a queen, and four as a woman performing various works of charity.

Quite one of the most imposing of London's monuments is the Albert Memorial in Kensington Gardens. It was erected in 1861 in memory of Prince Albert, the husband of Queen Victoria, at a cost of £120,000. Figures of great poets, painters and sculptors are carved on its base, and in the centre is a statue of the Prince Consort.

A mile or two from the Albert Memorial is the beautiful memorial to Queen Victoria, which faces



Buckingham Palace

Buckingham Palace. This monument to the great and good Queen stands at the head of the modern "Processional Way" in the Mall.

LONDON IN STONE

We have not nearly exhausted our descriptions of London's monuments in marble and stone. Those of you who like to visit Parliament Square can see Lord Beaconsfield's statue, which is decorated by the Primrose League on Primrose Day (19th April) with wreaths of that great statesman's favourite flower. Here, too, we may find statues to Palmerston, Derby, Peel and Canning. Close to Parliament Square, at the corner of Westminster Bridge, is the statue of Boadicea in her war-chariot.

Thus, in whatever part of London we may be, it is highly probable that we may discover statues to the memory of her great men. There is Burns, gazing across Father Thames, as though in deep contemplation of the busy river which has done so much to make London truly great; Robert Raikes, the founder of Sunday schools, has an honoured place in front of the Savoy Hotel; Bazalgette, the great engineer who constructed the Thames Embankment, has a bust and tablet to his memory close to the Hungerford Bridge; Gladstone faces the roaring Strand; and in public gardens facing the river there are memorials of Tyndale, the translator of the Bible, and John Stuart Mill, the great philosopher.

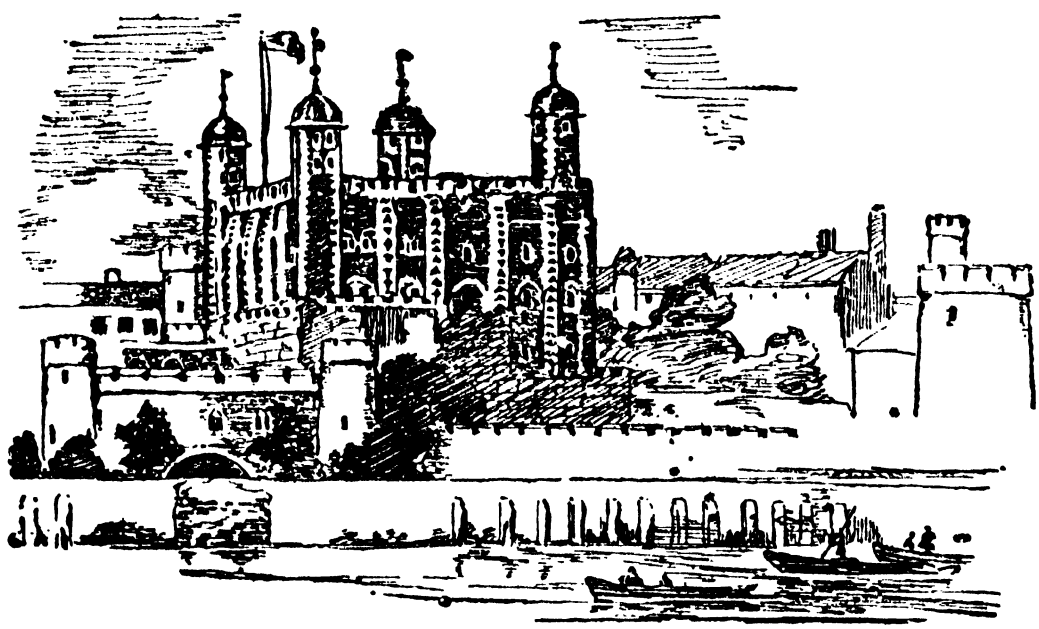
Perhaps you will take more interest in these lifeless images of departed heroes, and will look closely at them whenever you have occasion to pass by or near to them.

CHAPTER XII

THE TOWER OF LONDON

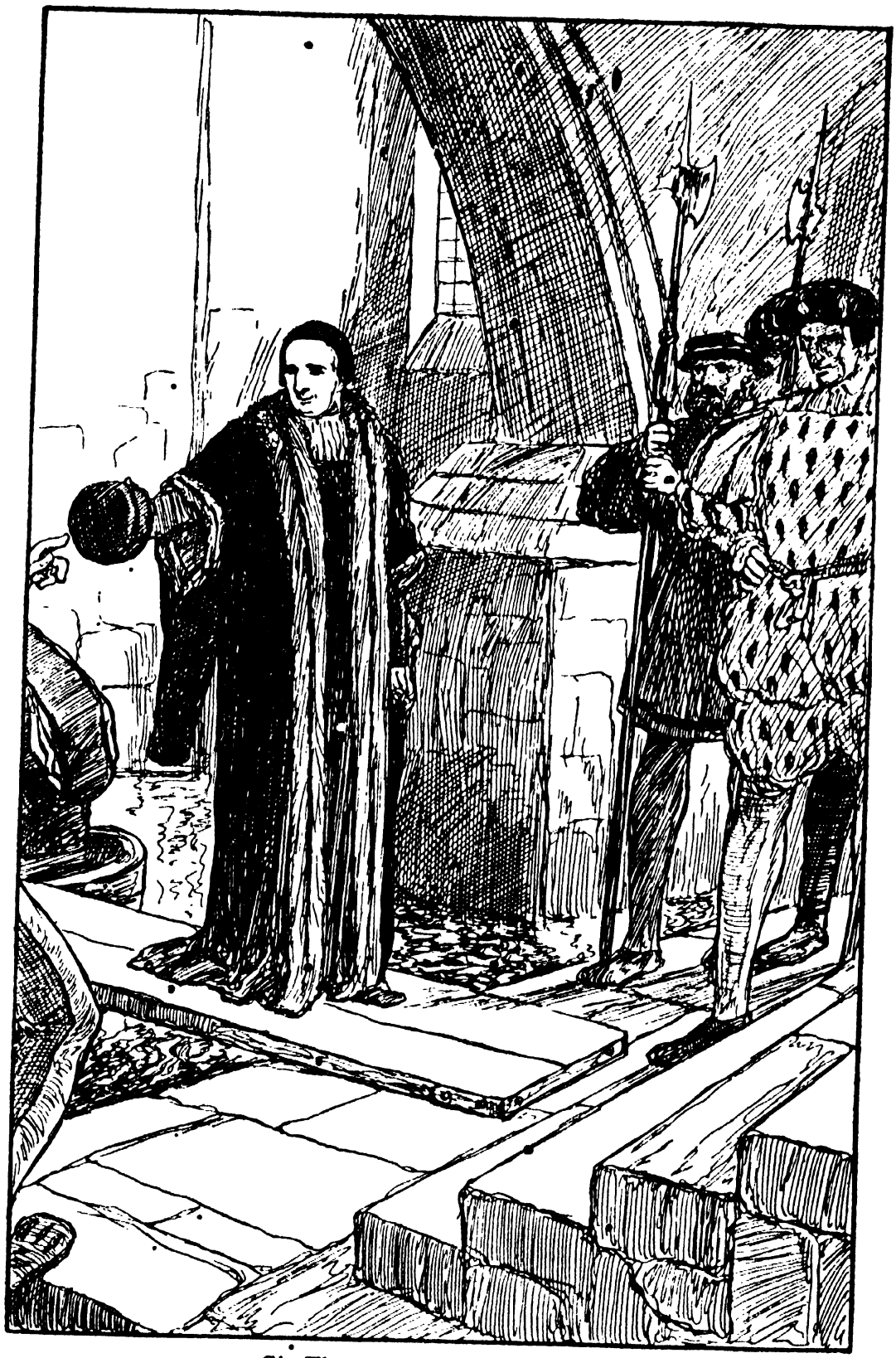
QUITE one of the most interesting and historic buildings in London is the Tower, which stands on the north bank of the Thames outside the old city walls. It was founded by William the Conqueror in 1078, and has been successively strengthened by various English sovereigns during the last eight centuries.

We have seen that the Conqueror did not march



The Tower of London

upon London straight from the battlefield of Senlac. After the surrounding counties had been conquered he formed a camp eastward of the city, and here the Norman troops lay for several weeks while arrange-



Sir Thomas More at the Tower

ments for the future government of London were discussed by the King and the leading citizens. After his coronation at Westminster Abbey, he commenced to build a fortress on the spot where the Tower now stands. The chief reason for this was to protect London from a foreign enemy who might seek to attack from the Thames.

At first the fortress probably consisted of a strong palisade on the top of the hill which we call Tower Hill. Soon, however, a strong castle, containing a Keep, and which is now known as the *White Tower*, was erected by Gundulf, a Norman monk, who was afterwards made Bishop of Rochester. The walls of the Keep were from eleven feet to fifteen feet in thickness, the thickest part of the wall being at the bottom. There is nothing at all beautiful in the architecture of the Keep. Beauty was sacrificed for strength; and as we look around at the plain bare walls of the interior, with the deep, narrow windows, we are able to obtain some idea of the enormous strength of a Norman castle.

Looking at the White Tower from a distance, or at a photograph of it, we may perhaps think that it is square. This, however, is not the case. All its sides are of different lengths, and its corners are not right angles. It is also curious that three of the turrets are square, and the fourth one circular.

Let us pay an imaginary visit to the Tower and take note of some of the principal buildings. Leaving Tower Hill we soon cross the moat, which is now drained, and which is used by the garrison as a football ground, or for drill and parade. We can quite realize that when this wide moat was filled with water it would

present a formidable barrier to the approach of an enemy. It would be well to take a general view of the fortifications from this point, where we shall be able to see the immensely strong bastions, and also Legge's Mount containing a battery.

Just at the point where we enter the Tower precincts there originally stood a fortified gate called the Conning Gate. Here a warder was always on duty to receive the prisoners. Walking on, we pass through an archway of the Middle Tower, which was first built by Henry III, and a few steps farther on is the Byward Tower, which was also commenced by Henry III. The Bell Tower, which we pass on our left, is famous as the place where Princess Elizabeth was kept in captivity by Queen Mary, and history also tells us that Guy Fawkes was tried and condemned to death in this tower.

All visitors to the Tower are anxious to see the Traitors' Gate, and here it is, just on our right. What a wide and massive arch it has, and how forbidding its appearance! "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here" would, indeed, have been a suitable motto to inscribe on its keystone. Famous prisoners, such as the ill-fated Lady Jane Grey, Anne Boleyn, and Sir Thomas More, entered the Tower through this gateway, on their way to a dreadful death.

We now pass under another tower, known as the Bloody Tower. Why it has this forbidding name is not quite clear, but some historians tell us that it was so named because of the suicide in it of the Earl of Northumberland in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. A Beefeater points out to us the grooves in which the chains ran that raised the huge portcullis.

Just opposite is the Wakefield Tower, so called because of the imprisonment of Yorkists in it after the battle of Wakefield in 1460. This building is especially interesting because it contains the famous Crown Jewels, which every visitor should see. The quaint dress of the Beefeaters, which is after the style of that worn in the Tudor period, generally attracts the attention of boys first. The Beefeaters are the Yeomen of the Guard, and were stationed by the royal side-board at great dinners, hence the curious name, which

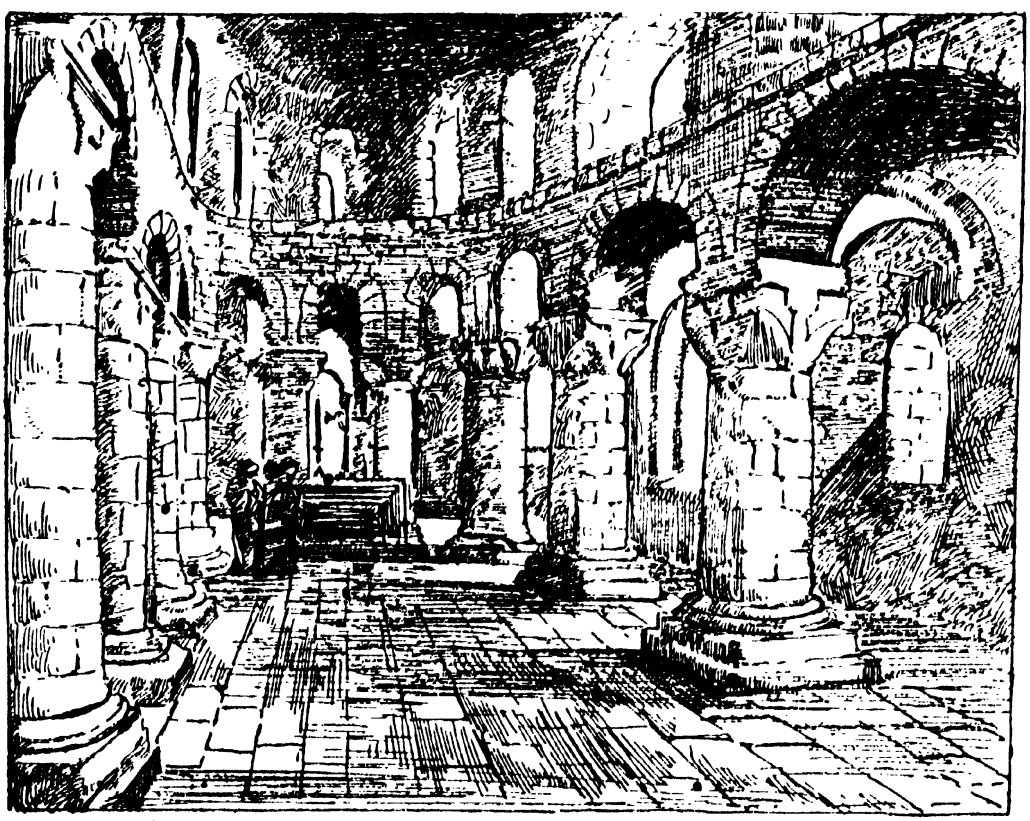


The Tower Bridge, near the Tower of London

is derived from the French word *buffetier*. They have various duties in the Tower, but their chief office seems to be that of caretaker. We notice how very strong is the large double cage which contains the various objects of the Regalia. And it need be strong too, for gems of priceless value are contained therein. Surmounting all the glittering objects is the King's Crown. Diamonds, sapphires, emeralds, pearls and many other jewels are cunningly worked into the rich

design. We think that it must be a very heavy article to wear on the head, and we learn that it weighs just under two and a half pounds. We are also told that it contains nearly 3000 diamonds and about 300 pearls, besides many other jewels. Other objects of historical interest are the crowns worn by Mary, the wife of William III; Mary of Modena, the wife of James II; and St Edward's Crown, worn by Charles II. There are also the Orb and Royal Sceptre, together with the different objects used at a coronation, such as the Anointing Spoon and Sacramental Plate.

After leaving the Wakefield Tower we cross over to the White Tower, of which we have already spoken.



St John's Chapel, Tower of London

In Mediæval times many famous prisoners were kept here, such as the Governor of Calais, with his twelve

brave citizens, who surrendered with halters around their necks to Edward III; King John of France, known as John the Good, who was taken prisoner by the Black Prince at Poitiers; and the Duke of Orleans, captured by Henry V at Agincourt. On one of the stairways we notice a tablet informing us that some children's bones were found buried at the foot of the stairs in the reign of Charles II, and which were thought to be the remains of the two young Princes who were said to have been murdered here by order of their cruel uncle, Richard III. There is no authentic information that these bones were their remains, although it is highly probable, as they were imprisoned here, and *The Chronicle of the Grey Friars of London*, referring to the first year's reign of Richard III, says: "And the two sons of King Edward were put to silence."



Knight in Plate Armour

The Chapel of St John, which forms part of the White Tower, is of great historical interest, because it is the most perfect specimen to be found in the country of any chapel belonging to a Norman castle. We notice the massive pillars, and round, plain arches, which were characteristic of this period.

The Armoury, also forming an interesting part of the White Tower, gives us a very good idea of the various kinds of armour worn by English soldiers during the different periods of our history. Most boys look with

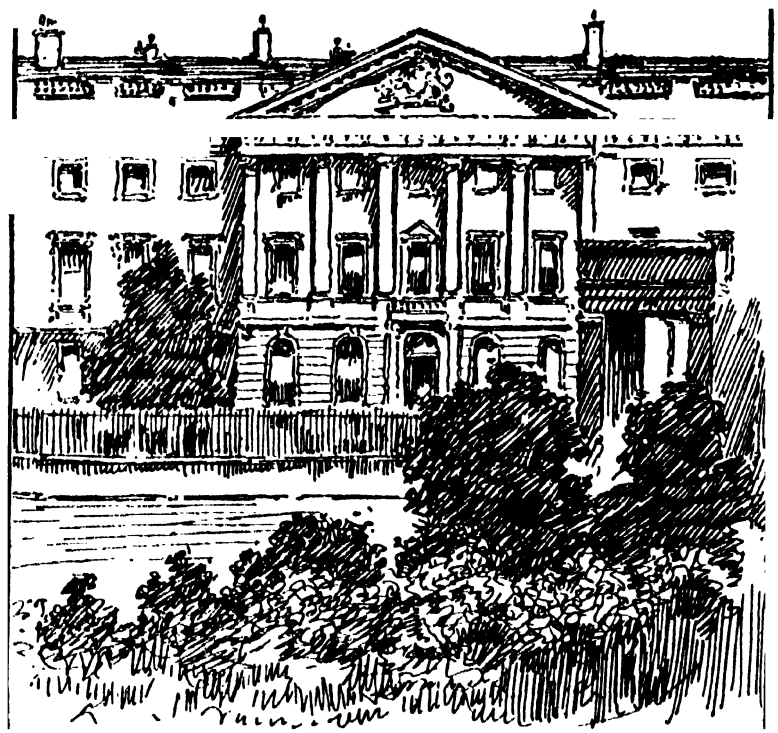
interest on the instruments of torture used in the Middle Ages, such as the thumbscrews, and a model of the rack. The headsman's axe and block are also contained here. One can learn a great deal of the progress made in arms and armour by a tour round the walls in the Armoury, and every boy should try to spend an hour or two there. On leaving the White Tower we notice the fine parade ground, and the Waterloo Barracks opposite, and it is quite possible that we shall see some recruits being drilled. We now pass over an open space called Tower Green. Here, on a small granite square, once stood the scaffold, on which were beheaded Anne Boleyn, Katharine Howard, Lady Jane Grey, and Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. Only private executions took place on Tower Green, and these were very few. A permanent scaffold for the execution of prisoners of rank in public, stood outside the Tower, on Tower Hill, and here were beheaded Lord Guildford Dudley—husband of Lady Jane Grey—Cromwell, Earl of Essex; More and Fisher; Strafford and Archbishop Laud. (In some accounts you may have read that Lady Jane Grey saw her husband's headless body brought from the scaffold on Tower Green. This was not the



Suit of Armour, Henry VIII

case: it had to be carried all the way from Tower Hill.)

The Beauchamp Tower, which we enter from Tower Green, is to many people the most interesting building in the Tower. For centuries it was used as a state prison, and memorials of famous prisoners can be seen on the walls. There is none of more pathetic interest than the carved name IANE (Jane). Who carved it,



The Mint

no one knows, but everyone knows of the dreadful sacrifice of this "nine days' queen," together with her young husband, both victims of an old man's ambition. As we walk around the forbidding walls, and look closely at the numerous inscriptions, we can imagine the state of mind of some of the wretched prisoners. Sir Walter Scott wove a thrilling romance around the inscription "Peverel" on one of the walls, in his *Peveril of the Peak*.

CHAPTER XIII

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL AND PAUL'S CROSS

WE have already spoken of Melitus, the first Bishop of London, who converted many of the East Saxons to Christianity, and also of Sebert, nephew of Ethelbert, King of Kent, who built the two churches to St Peter and St Paul. The latter church, which was a very small and roughly constructed building, stood on the site of the present magnificent Cathedral, which, as you know, is on Ludgate Hill. Of the original church we know very little, except that it was erected about the year 610, and was destroyed by fire in 1087.

Shortly after its destruction the people of London looked with wonder at barges coming up the river with stone from Caen, and at the small army of workmen who were busily engaged in levelling a space for the great and famous churchyard of St Paul's. Little by little a stately church arose, worthy to be ranked with the finest buildings in the world. This was known as "Old St Paul's," and one of the Norman architects said of it: "It is worthy of being numbered amongst the most famous of buildings;



Old St Paul's School before the Fire in 1666 (Founded by Dr Colet)

such is the extent of the crypt, of such capacity the upper structure, that it seems sufficient to contain a multitude of people."

Old St Paul's was a very different structure from the rude Saxon church which it displaced. We are told that it was built in the form of a Latin cross, 690 feet long, 130 feet broad, and with a spire rising to a height of 520 feet. During the time it was being constructed the workmen were delayed by earthquake, storm and fire, but in spite of these drawbacks they succeeded in raising a magnificent building of which London was justly proud.

The behaviour of people who attended church in those early days was far removed from that of to-day. Then the churches were the resorts of moneylenders, loungers and general dealers, who thought nothing of doing business in the intervals between the various services. In those times there were very few public buildings where the poor or unemployed could find temporary shelter, and the churches were a refuge for the idlers, much as some of our public libraries are nowadays. We are told that the nave of Old St Paul's was known as "Paul's Walk," because it was a favourite indoor promenade of moneylenders.

Old St Paul's was greatly damaged by fire about forty years after it was built, and in 1444 the restored building was struck by lightning. In 1561 the spire and Chapter House were seriously injured by fire, and the rebuilding cost over £6000, which, in those days, was a very large sum. Finally, in the Great Fire of London, it was completely destroyed. An historian of that period remarked: "The stones of St Paul's flew like grenades, the melting lead running down the

streets in a stream, and the very pavements glowing with a fiery redness, so as no horse or man was able to tread on them."

London had suffered such severe blows by the Great Plague and Fire that it is not surprising to read that the ruins of the famous church were allowed to lie for seven or eight years without any attempt at rebuilding. Then that master-architect, Sir Christopher Wren, of whom we have already spoken, was entrusted with the designing of a new cathedral. Probably no greater genius in architecture than Wren ever lived, and the noble Cathedral which we see to-day is generally considered to be his masterpiece. The first stone of the new building was laid on 21st June 1675, and it was thirty-five years before the building was completed. During this time bitter quarrels took place between Wren and the royal commissioners, and an Act was passed with a clause stating: "A portion of the Surveyor's (Wren's) salary to be suspended until the church should be finished, thereby the better to encourage him to finish the same with the utmost diligence and expedition." We tremble to think what would have been the fate of our beautiful Cathedral if Wren had taken offence at this clause and ceased his work on the plans.

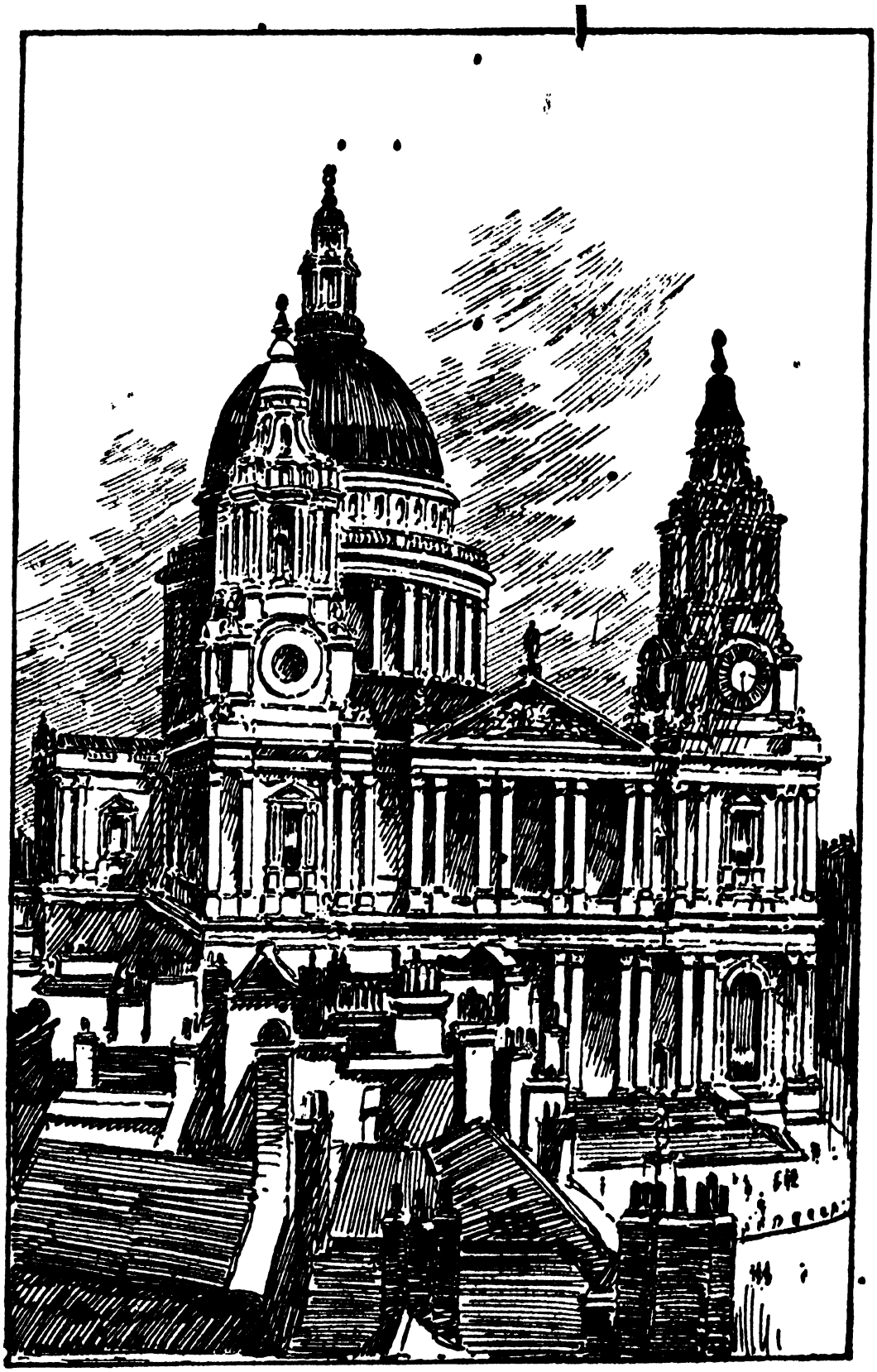
Strange to say, there is no monument to the great architect in the Cathedral or its precincts. But written above its majestic columns is the Latin legend which runs: "If you would see his monument look around." It has been truly said: "The dome which dominates London, the great cross which shines above London's river, and which sailors from the five oceans can see as they sail up to the metropolis of the British Empire is Wren's monument."

The whole building was completed at a total cost of just over a million and a half pounds. It is built of Portland stone, and its design is a cross. Its length is 510 feet; width 282 feet; and height from the top of the cross to the floor, 365 feet. Probably you are most familiar with the great dome, for this is one of London's landmarks. The dome is raised on eight arches, and above it is a lantern or gallery. This is an elegant and graceful piece of workmanship, and it is surmounted by a huge gilt ball and cross, which were put up in place of the originals in 1821.

One of the most notable exterior decorations may be seen in the south front. Here a huge phœnix rises from flames with the motto, *Resurgam* (I shall rise again). (A phœnix is a fabulous Egyptian bird, about the size of an eagle, which is regarded as a symbol of immortality. The legend says that the bird, when 500 years of age, built a funeral pile of wood and gums, which it lighted with the fanning of its wings. It afterwards rose from the flames with a new life.)

St Paul's is second only to Westminster Abbey in the beauty and number of its statues and monuments to immortal heroes. Quite one of the finest monuments is that to the Duke of Wellington, and, indeed, it is said that this is the finest work of its kind in England. There is a sarcophagus of white marble with ornaments in bronze, and the effigy of the great soldier rests upon it. Overhead is a beautifully designed canopy supported by columns of white marble, and on it there are bronze figures representing Valour overcoming Cowardice, and Truth plucking out Falsehood's tongue.

In the south transept there is a fine monument to



St Paul's Cathedral

Nelson representing England's greatest sailor standing in uniform with his left hand resting on an anchor and cable. Guarding the pedestal is the effigy of an enormous lion, an emblem of Britain, and there are carvings representing the German Ocean, Arctic Ocean, the Nile, and the Mediterranean.

Nelson's tomb may be seen in the centre of the crypt, and surrounding it are the tombs of other heroes, both of peace and of war. Wellington's funeral car, made of captured guns, also stands here. You should certainly go down into the crypt when you visit St Paul's. It has been a burial-place for men of renown for centuries past; and in one corner—the Painters' Corner—there lie the remains of Reynolds, Lawrence, Millais, Turner, and Landseer.

When you leave the Cathedral you should look for Paul's Cross, which stands on the north side of St Paul's Churchyard. The site on which this modern cross has been erected is one of the most historic places in London. Long before the present Cathedral was built, and even before the erection of Old St Paul's, this was a favourite place of resort for missionaries, and in Saxon times folkmoots were frequently held here. The original Paul's Cross was provided with a pulpit, and open-air services were for many years held just outside the Cathedral. Here, too, political discourses used to be delivered, and proclamations acclaimed. Many famous people did public penance at Paul's Cross, and this was especially the case in the time of the Lollards, when we read that the heretics, bearing faggots about their necks, stood on the platform below the preacher, while the preacher pointed the miserable penitents out to the audience around,

declaring that the faggots were a symbol of burning, a fate which these people had only just escaped.

In 1910 the new Paul's Cross was unveiled by the Bishop of London with a ceremonial which recalled these picturesque days. At the base of the tall column there is a black marble pulpit, and in this stood the Lord Mayor in his rich robes, with the Bishop of London on his right, and Archdeacon Sinclair on his left. Around them stood the sheriffs and city officials in scarlet and blue.

The Bishop of London (Dr Ingram) gave a descriptive account of the old cross: which, he said, was one of the most interesting memorials of the whole of England. "Here Papal bulls were promulgated and the Reformation announced; Luther's Bible burned at a service, and Miles Coverdale's Bible sent among the people. Here Latimer thundered against the vices of London, and here a woman in high position did penance in a white sheet for her offences."

The Bishop, in referring to the donor who gave £5000 for the erection of the cross, said he was sure it was his desire that the old custom of preaching a sermon from the cross should be revived, and he hoped the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's would arrange for that to be done from time to time.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

POSSIBLY many of my young readers have visited the British Museum. If not, then they should certainly take the first opportunity to do so, for it contains one of the largest collections of books and historical relics in the world.

The British Museum owes its foundation to Sir Hans Sloane, who, in 1753, gave to the nation his various collections of books, minerals, precious stones,



The British Museum

corals, shells, and antiquities from all parts of the world. Fifty years before this, however, the great-grandson of Sir Robert Cotton bequeathed his ancestor's great library to the public. Two centuries ago there were no public libraries as there are to-day, and Sir Robert Cotton had strongly advocated building

a public library in London, but there were many difficulties to be overcome before sufficient books could be obtained and a suitable building procured.

Sir Hans Sloane was a celebrated physician, and a great part of his valuable collection was obtained in the West Indies and Egypt, when he was travelling in those places. It is said that his various collections were worth £50,000, and on his death, in 1752, he gave them all to the nation on the condition that £20,000 was paid to his heirs. This sum of money, however, was not forthcoming. All sorts of plans were suggested by which the money could be raised, and at last the Government decided to raise the sum by a lottery. People were invited to take up shares at £3 a share, and 100,000 shares were to be issued. It was proposed to divide £200,000 among the lucky winners in the lottery, and the remaining £100,000 was to be used in the purchase of a suitable building to house the collection, to pay the £20,000 required for it, and to provide an annual income for the future upkeep of the museum.

The management of the lottery gave general dissatisfaction, but, after much hard work, a sufficient sum of money was obtained to purchase Montague House at a cost of £10,250. The Sloane and other smaller collections were stored in this house, which was first open to the public on 15th January 1759.

As years passed, other collectors bequeathed their antiquities, relics and books to the Museum, and it was found impossible to store them all in Montague House. It was therefore decided to replace the original house by a much larger building, which was completed in 1847. This is the building, with certain

additions, which we see to-day. What a fine building it is, too! There is a massive portico at the entrance, but the outside walls are quite plain. The Museum is open to the public on every weekday—except Good Friday and Christmas Day—from 10 A.M. till 6 P.M. in the summer, and till 4 P.M. in the winter.

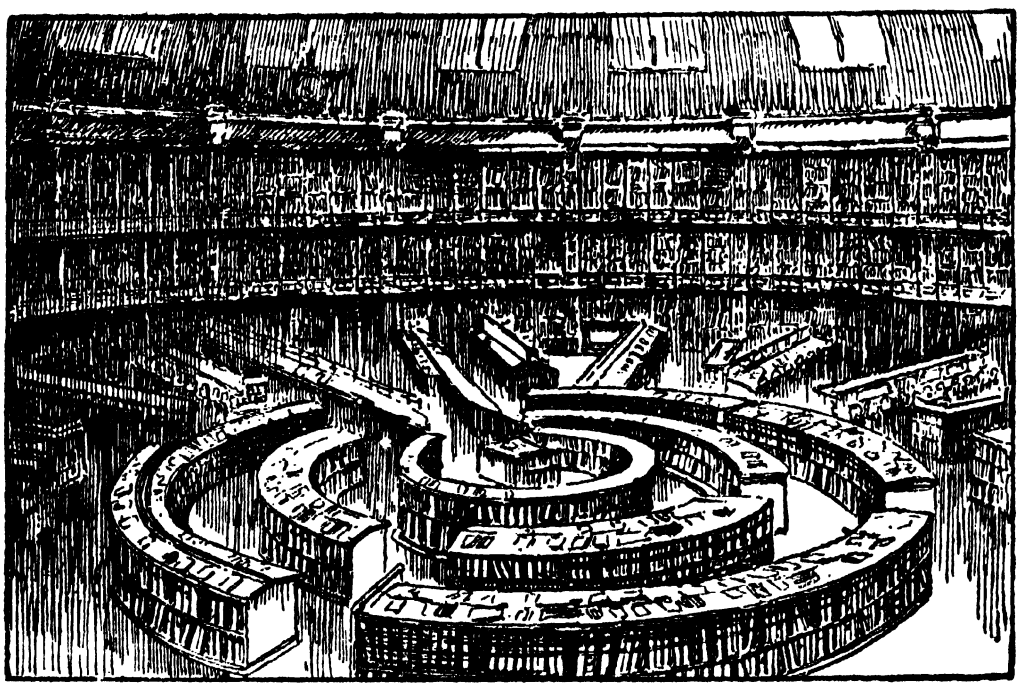
All London boys and girls should certainly visit the British Museum. Here may be seen relics of pre-



Corner of Egyptian Gallery, British Museum

historic times, many of which have been unearthed from London clay. Illuminated manuscripts, many centuries old, are on view in various cases, and we are

able to see the beautifully hand-decorated pages, written by the monks, who were the historians of mediæval and early ages. Magna Charta is there, too, framed and hanging on a wall, and in the same gallery the priceless *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* may be seen. Autographs of monarchs, famous historians, statesmen, authors and poets are contained in one of the galleries. You would be interested in the



British Museum—Reading Room

unfinished letter to Lady Hamilton, written by Nelson on the eve of Trafalgar; the delicately made prayer-book of Lady Jane Grey, which was always carried by this "nine days' queen" right up to the time when she was led out to Tower Green for execution; the last page of General Gordon's diary; and hundreds of other interesting charters and documents.

Other galleries are stocked with antiquities of ancient Greece, Egypt and Rome; and, in one gallery, we see several specimens of mummies.

One of the principal buildings is the enormous Reading Room, where over four hundred readers or writers can be accommodated. This room was built in 1857 at a cost of £150,000. It is in the form of a circle 140 feet in diameter, with a dome of glass and iron 106 feet in height. You would not be allowed to use the Reading Room until you are over twenty-one years of age, and not then unless you obtained a ticket of admission. Perhaps you know that a copy of every book published in this country has to be sent to the British Museum, and it is said that the books in the library occupy nearly fifty miles of shelving.

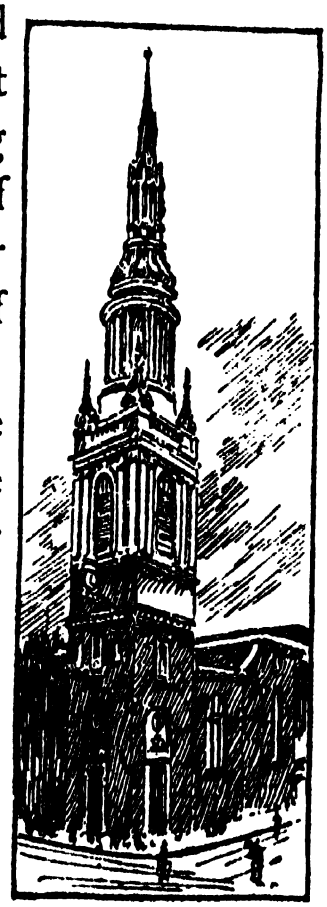
CHAPTER XV

THE GUILDHALL, ROYAL EXCHANGE AND BANK

(a) *The Guildhall*

PROBABLY many of you have been in Cheapside. If so you may have noticed the Guildhall, which is the city hall of London, and the termination of the Lord Mayor's Show on 9th November.

The first city hall was erected in 1411, as a place where the magistrates could sit, and where the city council could conduct the business of the city. This building was greatly damaged by the Fire of London in 1666, but three years after it was rebuilt, with the exception of the front, which was added in 1789.



Bow Church, Cheapside

There are several departments in the Guildhall, but the chief room is the Great Hall, which is 153 feet long and 48 broad. Here the great city feasts and receptions are held. One of the chief feasts is the banquet held on Lord Mayor's Day, at which there are nearly one thousand guests.

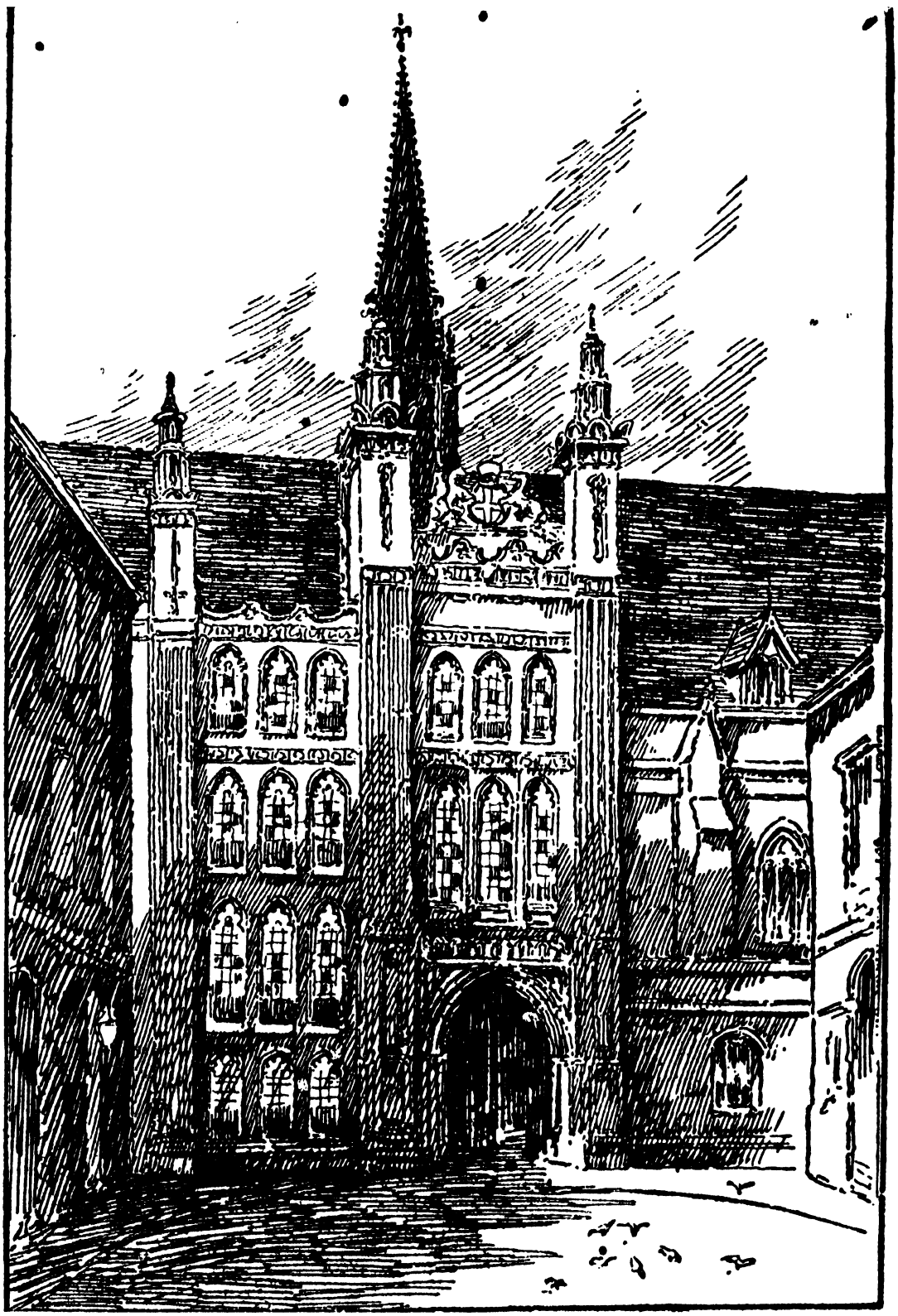
If you went into the hall you would probably be most interested in *Gog* and *Magog*. These are two enormous wooden

statues, over 14 feet high, the one on the left being called *Gog*, and the one on the right, *Magog*. These figures were first set up in 1768. They are supposed to represent early British giants. The old legend says that the men of ancient Britain were of gigantic stature and vast strength, having "arms of knotty oak clubs, globes full of spikes, and whirlbats of iron." Gogmagog was the chief of the giants, but, according to one story, another giant, as large and strong as he, shared his name, so that they were afterwards called Gog and Magog. They were taken prisoners and led from Cornwall to the spot where London now stands. The original figures representing these giants were made of wicker-work, and were carried round the streets in the Lord Mayor's procession, but they were destroyed in the Great Fire.

There are statues to famous men, such as Nelson and Wellington, standing around the Great Hall, and the stained-glass windows represent striking scenes in London's history. In the Common Council-room there is a collection of valuable pictures. The Guildhall library and museum are opened to the public daily, and a visit to the latter would be very instructive if one wants to see specimens of relics and antiquities found in Roman, Saxon, and Mediæval London. Perhaps you would look with interest on the ancient whipping-post, which was originally in Newgate, but which was added to the Guildhall collection of relics in 1902. There are many good specimens of the



Sign of the Ape and the Apple, Guildhall MS.

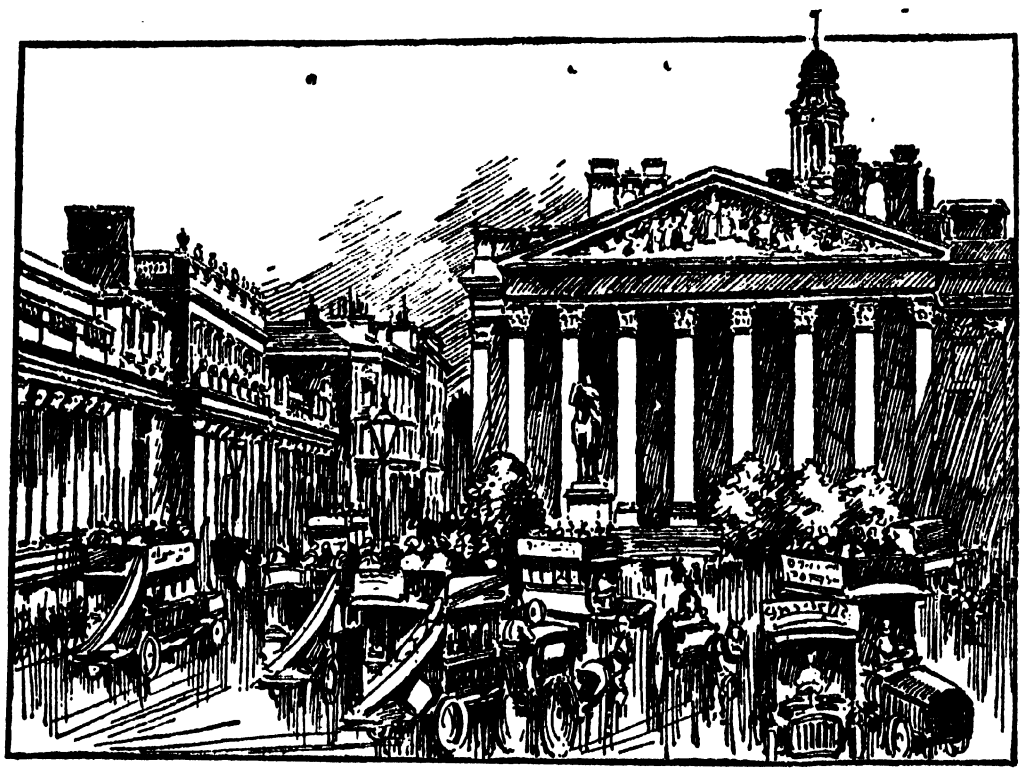


Entrance to the Guildhall

curious signs which were used by London's shopkeepers and publicans three centuries ago.

(b) *The Royal Exchange*

Another of London's great public buildings which has suffered much from fire is the Royal Exchange. The first Exchange was built by Sir Thomas Gresham, a rich city merchant, in 1566, but it was destroyed in



Bank of England and Royal Exchange

the Great Fire. Before this building was erected the London merchants conducted their business in the open air. Gresham's father, who was Lord Mayor of London, suggested to Henry VIII that a building where the merchants could transact business should be put up at the public expense, but the King did not carry out the suggestion. Sir Thomas Gresham, about

twenty-seven years later, offered to erect a building at his own expense if the council would give him the land on which to build it. The offer was accepted, and over one hundred dwellings, with three alleys, were pulled down to make room.

The first Exchange was a fine building which contained numerous shops, walks and rooms for the merchants. An account of the Great Fire mentions



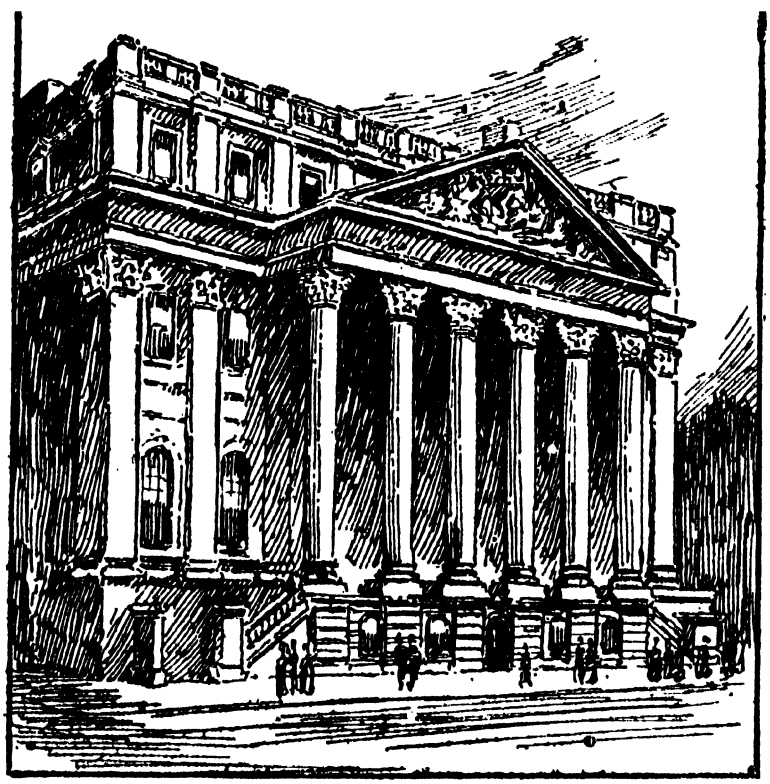
The Exchange, Cornhill and Lombard Street, 1760

the destruction of this building in these words: "The Royal Exchange itself, the glory of merchants, is now invaded with much violence. When the fire was entered, how quickly did it run round the galleries, filling them with flames; then descending the stairs, compasseth the walks, giving forth flaming vollies, and filling the court with sheets of fire; by-and-by, the kings fell all down upon their faces, and the greatest part of the building with them (the founder's statue only remaining), with such a noise as was dreadful and astonishing."

The second Exchange was erected by the Mercers' Company, and was publicly opened by Charles II in

1669. This stood until the year 1838, when it, too, was burnt down.

The present building is the grandest of the three. On the walls of the interior are fine historical paintings, which you may have seen reproduced in some of your history-books. One is by Lord Leighton and represents the Phœnician merchants bartering with the ancient



The Mansion House

Britons; another by Seymour Lucas shows us London receiving its charter from William the Conqueror; in others Sir Richard Whittington is seen dispensing his charities and King John is shown at the sealing of Magna Charta; a striking painting illustrating the Great Fire in 1666 is by Stanhope Forbes.

Perhaps some of you will wonder why such a curious

vane has been fixed on the top of the building. It is in the form of a large gilded grasshopper, and this curiously shaped insect was used as a design for the vane, because the grasshopper was the crest of Sir Thomas Gresham.

On the south-east side of the Exchange there is a fine upright statue of Sir Rowland Hill, the man who did so much to institute the "penny post." We do not wonder that the merchants should wish to commemorate him, because a cheap postal system greatly helps to make trade prosper. George Peabody is also represented by a statue which stands in the rear of the Exchange. Peabody will always be remembered by the cheap dwellings which he erected in London for the working classes. These are known as *Peabody Buildings*, and it is estimated that over 20,000 people live in them. In the centre of the courtway there is a statue of Queen Victoria.

The gates of the Royal Exchange are opened every morning at 9.30, but the merchants do not transact business until the afternoon. At 3.30 a notice is shown at the various entrances with these words: "Gentlemen are reminded that the gates close for entrance to Change at 3.35 punctually." All at once crowds of merchants seem to spring up from nowhere. In five minutes the courtyard, which has been nearly empty all day, is crowded with keen business men striving to cram all the business possible into the time at their disposal, and for half-an-hour they are rapidly taking down orders in notebooks. On Tuesdays and Thursdays the city bankers and brokers meet at 1.30, and for an hour they are discussing the money matters of many nations.

(c) *The Bank*

Another of the City's sights—the Bank of England—stands quite near the Royal Exchange. What a solid mass of masonry is the "Old Lady of Threadneedle Street," as the Bank is called! One can easily see that it is a place of security rather than of beauty. The outside walls have no windows, and the building is one storey high.

To William Paterson (a Scotsman) is due the credit of devising and founding the Bank of England in 1694. Previous to this, for some forty years, the goldsmiths of London (a wealthy and influential body) were in the habit of changing foreign money and lending at interest.

A few years ago, the rooms where the banknotes are printed, the coins weighed, and the precious metals stored, were open to visitors; but they are now closed. You would be interested in watching the weighing-machine testing sovereigns. So delicately are the scales adjusted that the weight of a human hair makes them show a difference of balance. The machine weighs thirty-three sovereigns in a minute, and those coins which weigh less than the standard required are thrown into a special compartment whence they will be taken to the Mint to be melted down. Sometimes many thousands of sovereigns are tested in a day.

The Bank of England prints its own banknotes, and the printing department produces from 40,000 to 60,000 notes in a day, ranging in value from £5 to £1000. Postal orders and money orders are also printed here.

At night a number of armed soldiers with several warders guard the Bank, and we are not surprised at these precautions when we learn that there are usually £20,000,000 in gold and silver stored in the enormous vaults, besides banknotes to the value of millions of pounds.

CHAPTER XVI

THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

THESE handsome buildings, consisting of the House of Lords, House of Commons, and many smaller buildings, were erected in 1840, at a cost of nearly £3,000,000. They are dominated by three majestic towers—the Clock Tower, or St Stephen's Tower, nearest Westminster Bridge; the Middle Tower; and the Victoria Tower.

Probably you are more familiar with the Clock



The Houses of Parliament

Tower, for this contains Big Ben, the enormous bell weighing thirteen tons, which can be heard in the calm

of early morning over the greater part of London. This great bell was named after Sir Benjamin Hall, who was First Commissioner of Works at the time it was erected. At night, when Parliament is sitting, the Clock Tower is brilliantly lighted.

The Victoria Tower is the largest of the three towers, and it flies the Union Jack by day when the "House" is "sitting." Through the entrance in this imposing tower the King enters the House in state when he formally opens Parliament.

One of the best exterior views of the Houses of Parliament can be obtained from Westminster Bridge, whence the river front of the House, over 900 feet in length, may be seen. The long terrace facing the river forms a delightful promenade, and in summer many of the members, with their friends, take tea there.

The Houses of Parliament are open for the inspection of visitors on Saturdays by tickets which may be obtained at the entrance. When Parliament is sitting it is much more difficult to obtain admission, and, generally, one has to get a permit from a member before one is allowed inside. At such times the entrance is on the west side near the Victoria Tower. (The present writer on a recent visit tried to obtain an entrance through Palace Yard, nearest Westminster Bridge, but he was turned back by stalwart policemen, who informed him that members and officials only were allowed to enter by this way.)

After we have ascended the short staircase in the west entrance we pass through the Norman Porch into the King's Robing-Room, and from there to the beautiful Victoria Gallery, over 100 feet in length. We notice the spotlessly clean pavement, with rich

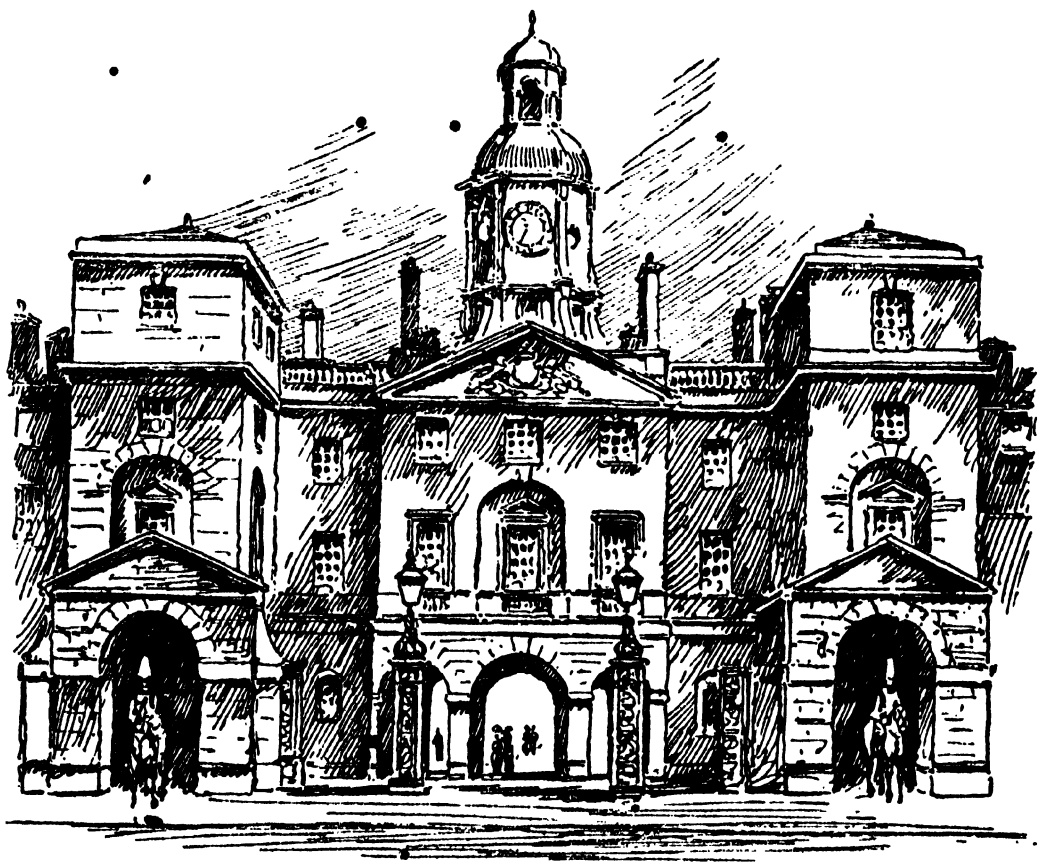
inlaid work, and the handsome gilt ceiling. We next enter Prince's Chamber, which contains many beautiful paintings of English monarchs, and from here we pass into the House of Lords.

This is a very beautiful building, 90 feet long, 45 broad, and 45 high. There are twelve windows of stained glass representing all the monarchs of England since the Conquest. The walls and ceiling are handsomely decorated with frescoes. (Frescoes are paintings of various scenes or persons done in water-colours on limestone plaster. The colours dry into the plaster, and last as long as the plaster does.) Some of the frescoes in the House of Lords represent the Baptism of King Ethelbert; Edward III investing the Black Prince with the Order of the Garter; and Prince Henry (afterwards Henry V) acknowledging the authority of the Judge who had committed him to prison.

At one end of the House there is the King's gorgeous throne surmounted by a rich canopy, and on either side of it, but in a lower position, are the thrones of the Queen Consort, and Prince of Wales. You may have seen pictures in the illustrated papers showing the King in the act of reading the "King's Speech" from the throne when he officially opens Parliament. Standing in front of the throne is the woolsack. This is a large square seat or lounge stuffed with wool, without back or arms, covered with red material; and it forms the seat of the Lord Chancellor who presides over the House of Lords. At the opposite end to the throne is the Bar, where communications from the House of Commons are delivered, and above the Bar there are galleries for visitors.

Leaving the House of Lords we pass by way of the

Peers' Lobby and Peers' Corridor into the large Central Hall, on our way to the House of Commons. We cross over the lofty and beautifully decorated building and enter the Commons' Corridor, noting frescoes of many famous historical scenes. We enter the House of Commons through the Commons' Lobby, and we at once notice that the House of Commons is not so



The Horse Guards, Whitehall

luxuriously upholstered and decorated as is the House of Lords. "Use rather than ornament" seems to have been the motto of the architect in designing this building.

At the north end we see the Speaker's seat. (The Speaker is a member of the House who has been

elected president, or chairman. His duty among other things is to preserve order and control the debates.) In front of his seat we see a table on which the mace lies. This is a kind of heavy ornamental staff used as an emblem of authority, and it always lies on the table when the House is sitting. Above the Speaker's chair is a gallery where newspaper reporters are busily taking down notes on the debate; and higher still, behind a strong iron grating, is a gallery for lady visitors. Strangers who are fortunate enough to obtain permission to enter the House of Commons are accommodated in galleries at the opposite end of the House to the Speaker's chair.

The most historical building in the whole group of buildings is Westminster Hall. We have already spoken of the Old Palace of Westminster, and this building was the hall of the Palace. It was erected by Richard II in 1398 on the foundations of a hall built by William II. Could the stones of this ancient building speak what a story they would tell! Here Charles I was tried and condemned to death; and Warren Hastings was impeached. Under its beautiful roof of carved timber—one of the most notable roofs of any building in the country—the coronation festivals of many English monarchs were held; here, too, Sir Thomas More and the Earl of Strafford had their trials and received sentence of death; and it was in this noble building that the body of Edward the Peace-maker lay in state, while tens of thousands of his devoted subjects reverently passed before the richly draped catafalque.

CHAPTER XVII

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

TO-DAY we will pay a visit to one of the most historic and beautiful buildings in Britain—Westminster Abbey. Here, for centuries, our sovereigns have been crowned; here, too, have many of them been borne, with much pomp and ceremony, when death has overtaken them. To be buried within its walls has been the greatest honour which the nation can bestow, and its hallowed sepulchres contain the bones of England's greatest. Every London boy and girl should certainly visit this magnificent building, and examine reverently the monuments, statues and tombs of departed heroes, both of peace and of war. A great writer has described the feeling one experiences in a tour round this vast building in these words: "The gloom of this vast edifice produces a deep and mysterious awe. We step cautiously and softly about as if fearful of disturbing the hallowed silence of the tomb; while every footfall whispers along the walls, and chatters among the sepulchres, making us more sensible of the quiet we have interrupted. We feel that we are surrounded by the congregated bones of the great men of past times who have filled history with their deeds, and the earth with their renown."

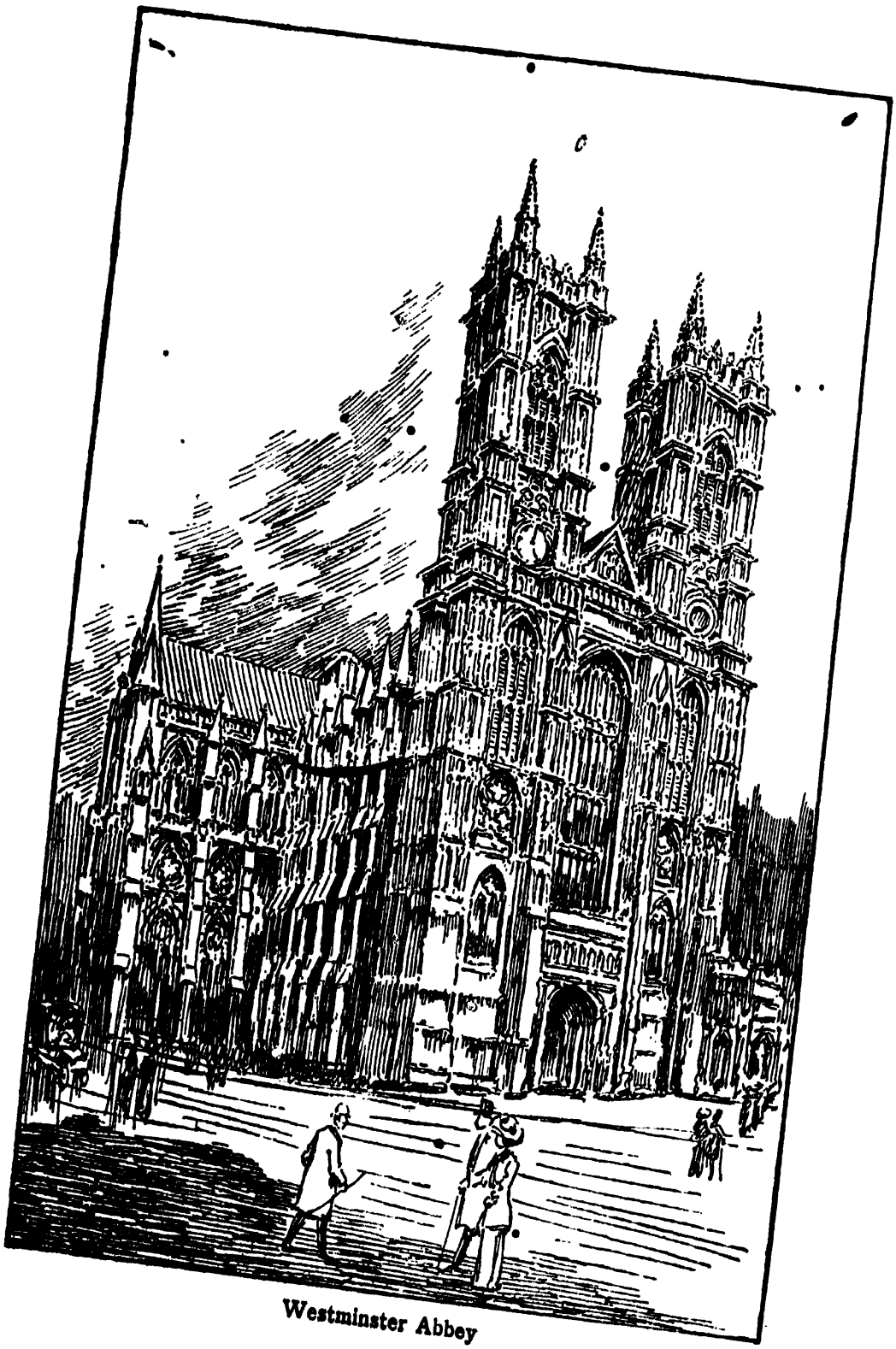
The history of the Abbey is nearly as ancient as the

history of London itself. After the introduction of Christianity into England, and the induction of Mellitus as the first Bishop of London, a church was erected by the king of the East Saxons on Thorney Island. At this time the Thames seemed to have formed an island at the spot which we call Westminster, and this island was rough, uncultivated, and covered with thorns and brambles. The church was not completed until about 350 years afterward, and in the meantime another fine church had been built about two miles to the east, in the City, on the site of St Paul's Cathedral. To distinguish the two churches, King Edgar called that dedicated to St Peter the "West Minster," and the other, dedicated to St Paul, the "East Minster."

All the good work of Sebert, King of Essex, and of King Edgar, appears to have been destroyed by the heathen Danes, for they burned down the West Minster. You have read that the Danes had a special liking for the spoils of monasteries, and a perfect hatred of any building consecrated to the service of God.

We hear little more of the church on Thorney Island until the reign of Edward the Confessor. This King rebuilt many of the ruined churches, and in December 1065 he erected an abbey here, intending it to be the place of coronation for the kings and queens of England. It is interesting to note that the Saxon King's desire has been invariably followed for over eight hundred years. Some of the coronation robes were presented to the Abbey by the King, and portions of this ancient regalia are still worn on Coronation Day by our sovereigns. Parts of the original Abbey are to be seen in the pyx-house, and on the south side of the cloisters.

Besides erecting an Abbey on the island, Edward the

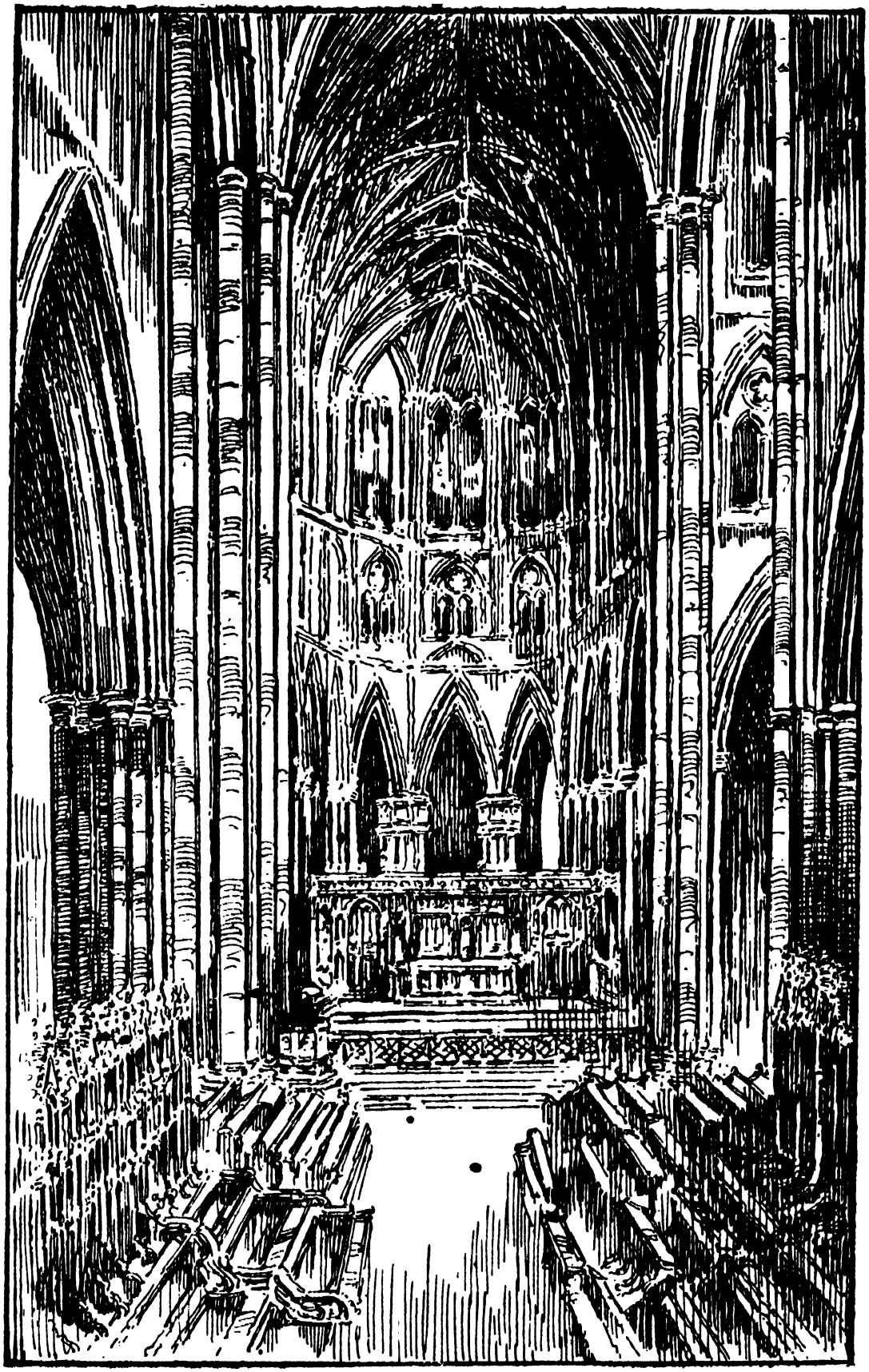


Westminster Abbey

Confessor also built a Palace, between the Abbey and the Thames, and Westminster Palace was the royal residence of many of our early sovereigns. (The present Palace of Westminster, commonly called the Houses of Parliament, is quite a modern building on the site of the old palace.) The Norman kings lived in the Palace and worshipped in the Abbey. William II had plans prepared for an enlargement of the Palace, and he built a large hall adjoining it, which was afterwards rebuilt by Richard II.

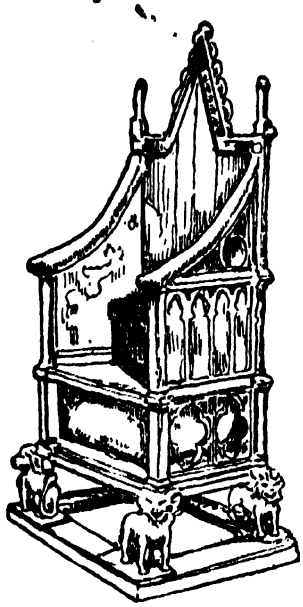
The main building of the Abbey, as it now stands, was begun by Henry III, and completed by Edward I. Various sovereigns made additions to it, down to the reign of Henry VII. This King built a magnificent chapel, which bears his name. It is said that the King built this gorgeous chapel at enormous expense for the purposes of a royal tomb, and there are few more beautifully designed and decorated buildings in existence. Here are contained the remains of Henry VII and his wife; Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth; Mary, Queen of Scots; James I; Charles I; William III; Queen Anne, and George II.

One of the most interesting parts of the Abbey is the south transept, which contains "Poets' Corner." Many of the mighty masters of literature, whose deathless words have influenced the lives of countless millions, sleep peacefully in that sacred spot. From Chaucer, the father of English poetry, to Tennyson, the glorious line extends. Here may be found tablets to the memory of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Dryden, Macaulay, Dickens, Tennyson, and Browning, together with those of smaller men who also were deemed worthy of this great honour.



Interior of Westminster Abbey

The Coronation Chair may be seen in the choir; just underneath the seat is the famous coronation stone which was brought from Scone, in Scotland, by Edward I, and over which all the English sovereigns have ever since been crowned. This was the "stone of destiny" of the Scottish, and its removal was a severe blow to our northern kinsmen.



The Coronation Chair containing the Stone of Destiny (Westminster Abbey)

In the north transept we find monuments to warriors and statesmen, most of whom have helped to make England great.

It has been said that if all the monuments and memorials which have been erected since the decline of Gothic art could be removed from the Abbey, we should have the most beautiful interior of any church in England, and one of the most beautiful in all Europe. This, however, would banish much of historical importance for which the Abbey is universally famed, for, in the words of a French Count: "No monument has ever been more identified with the history of a people; every one of its stones represents a page in the annals of the country."

Mere words fail to give justice to the magnificent architecture, the beautiful rose windows, the grand archways, and the "long-drawn aisle and fretted vault." One must walk under the roof of the lofty nave, and through the splendid arcade forming the triforium, to understand something of the art of bygone days. Here and there in the aisle one may see traces of ancient sculpture. Pioneers of industry are commemorated in the stained-glass windows, those in the north

aisle showing respectively: Richard Trevithick, the inventor of the first steam-engine which ran on any railway; Brunel, the engineer; Joseph Locke, and Robert Stephenson.

Some remarkable sculptures known as "the censing angels," can be seen in the north and south transepts; and a great authority in speaking of them says: "Perhaps if we had to select the best public statue in England, it would be impossible to overlook the angel in the north transept on the western side. He appears to be literally hovering in the air, or, rather—for this the sculptor has most marvellously expressed—he is supposed to be swinging his censer in the presence of his Lord, and to be floating in a sea of light which forces him to bow his head, and avert his face from its dazzling effulgence."

Englishmen are proud, and rightly proud, of their glorious Abbey, and we, as Londoners, are specially privileged in being able to walk reverently around its aisles, and see many of its beauties. Had Lord Hugh Cecil in a recent speech in the House of Commons on the British Constitution—which I quote with slight alteration—been speaking of the Abbey, the glowing peroration would have been no less true: "I look upon it with something more than the reverence with which a man of good taste looks upon an ancient and beautiful building. . . . Let us then go into the temple and con over its stones and saturate ourselves with its atmosphere, and then, continuing its traditions, let us adorn and embellish them. . . . High on the eminence of its glory it stands safe and secure, safe from the waters of oblivion, safe from the tide of time."

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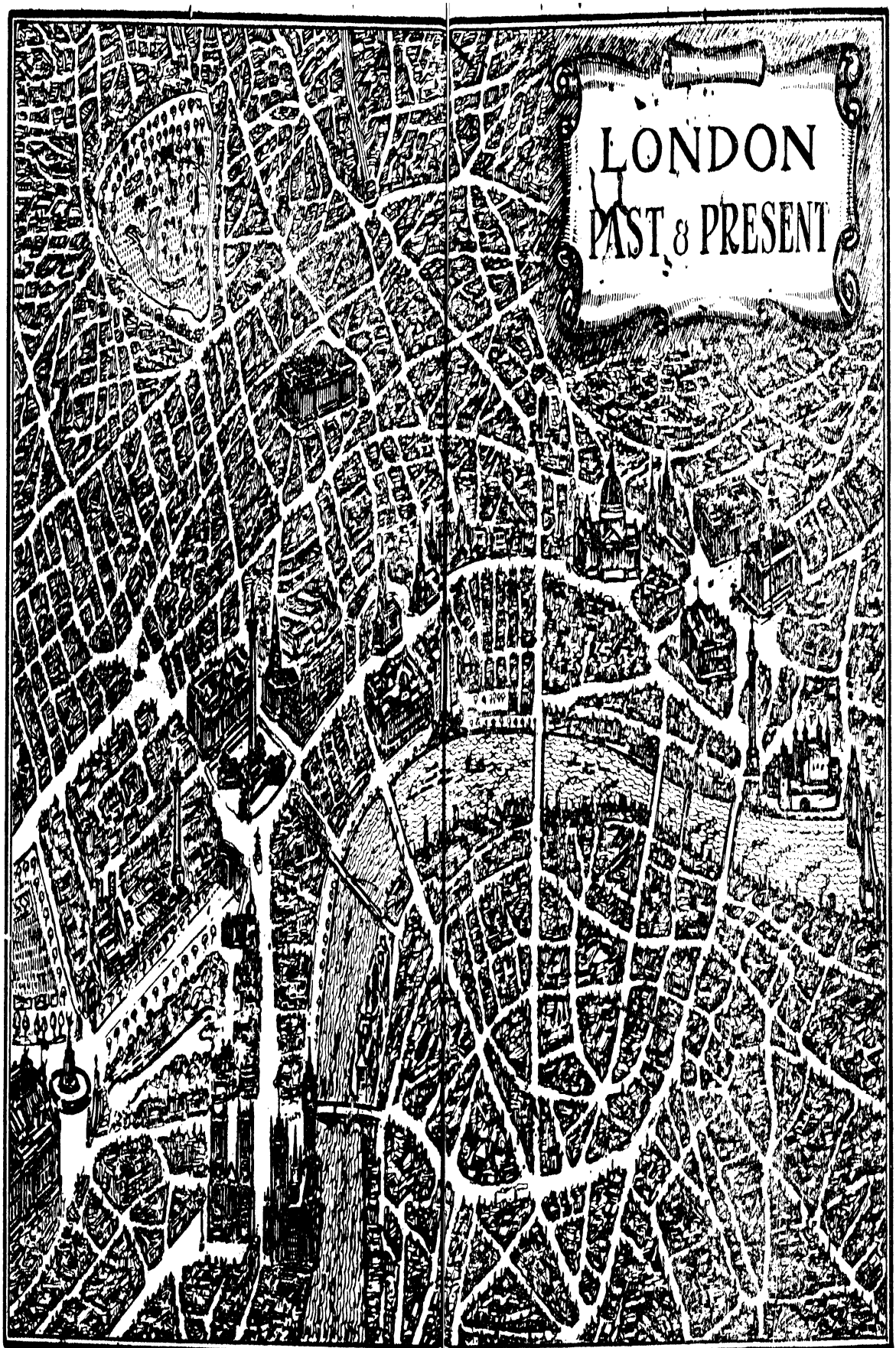
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PAST & PRESENT